

**UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF
TEXAS, DALLAS DIVISION**

In Re: Highland Capital Management, L.P. § Case No. **19-34054-SGJ-11**

Hunter Mountain Investment Trust

Appellant §

vs. §

Highland Capital Management, L.P, et al § **3:23-CV-2071-E**

Appellee §

**[3904] Order Pursuant to Plan "Gatekeeper Provision" and Pre-Confirmation "Gatekeeper Orders"
Denying Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary
Proceeding. Entered on 8/25/2023.**

Volume 32

APPELLANT RECORD

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
DALLAS DIVISION

In re:

HIGHLAND CAPITAL
MANAGEMENT, L.P.

Reorganized Debtor.

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Chapter 11

Case No. 19-34054-sgj11

INDEX

**APPELLANT HUNTER MOUNTAIN INVESTMENT TRUST'S
SECOND SUPPLEMENTAL STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES AND
DESIGNATION OF ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE APPELLATE RECORD**

COMES NOW Appellant/Movant Hunter Mountain Investment Trust, both in its individual capacity and derivatively on behalf of the Reorganized Debtor, Highland Capital Management, L.P., and the Highland Claimant Trust,¹ (collectively, "Appellant" or "HMIT"), and files this Second Supplemental² Statement of the Issues and Designation of Items for Inclusion in the Appellate Record pursuant to Federal Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 8009(a)(1):

**I.
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES**

- A. Did the bankruptcy court err in determining that the "colorable" claim analysis allowed the court to consider evidence and other non-pleading materials including, but not limited to, the court's reasoning that:
1. the colorability analysis is stricter than a non-evidentiary, Rule 12(b)(6)-type analysis;
 2. the colorability analysis is "akin to the standards applied under the ... *Barton* doctrine";
 3. the colorability analysis requires a "hybrid" of the *Barton* doctrine and "what courts have applied when considering motions to file suit when a vexatious litigant bar order is in place"; and/or,

¹ And in all capacities and alternative derivative capacities asserted in HMIT's Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding [Dkt. Nos. 3699, 3815, and 3816] ("Emergency Motion"), the supplement to the Emergency Motion [Dkt. No. 3760], and the draft Complaint attached to the same [Dkt. No. 3760-1].

² Appellant files this Second Supplement pursuant to the Clerk's request at Docket #3949 and correspondence on 10/23/2023.

4. “[t]here may be mixed questions of fact and law implicated by the Motion for Leave”?

[See Dkt. Nos. 3781, 3790, 3903-04].

- B. Did the bankruptcy court err in determining that Appellant lacked constitutional or prudential standing to bring its claims in its individual and derivative capacities?

[See Dkt. Nos. 3903-04].

- C. Did the bankruptcy court err in alternatively determining that, even under a non-evidentiary, Rule 12(b)(6)-type analysis, Appellant did not assert colorable claims including, but not limited to, determining that:

1. Appellant’s allegations are conclusory, speculative, or constitute “legal conclusions”;
2. Appellant’s claims or allegations are not “plausible”;
3. Appellant’s allegations pertaining to a *quid pro quo* are “pure speculation”;
4. Proposed Defendant James P. Seery (“Seery”) owed no duty to Appellant in any capacity as a matter of law;
5. Appellant failed “to allege facts in the Proposed Complaint that would support a reasonable inference that Seery breached his fiduciary duty to HMIT or the estate as a result of bad faith, self-interest, or other intentional misconduct rising to the level of a breach of the duty of loyalty”;
6. Appellant’s allegations pertaining to its aiding and abetting and conspiracy claims are speculative and not plausible;
7. The remedies of equitable disallowance and equitable subordination are not remedies “available” to Appellant as a matter of law;
8. Appellant’s unjust enrichment claim is invalid as a matter of law because “Seery’s compensation is governed by express agreements”;
9. Appellant is not entitled to declaratory relief because it has no colorable claims; and/or
10. Appellant cannot recover punitive damages for its breach of fiduciary duty claim?

[See Dkt. Nos. 3903-04].

- D. Alternatively, even if the bankruptcy court correctly determined that its “hybrid” *Barton* analysis controls, did the court violate Appellant’s due process rights by denying Appellant its requested discovery?

[See Dkt. Nos. 3800, 3853, 3903-04, June 8, 2023 Hearing].

- E. Alternatively, did the bankruptcy court err by denying Appellant’s requested discovery including, but not limited to:

1. ordering that Appellant could not request or obtain any discovery other than a deposition of Seery and James D. Dondero; and/or
2. determining that state court “Rule 202” proceedings supported the denial of discovery?

[See Dkt. Nos. 3800 & June 8, 2023 Hearing; *see also* Dkt. Nos. 3903-04].

- F. Alternatively, did the bankruptcy court err by denying Appellant’s alternative request for a continuance to obtain the requested discovery?

- G. Alternatively, did the bankruptcy court err by excluding Appellant’s evidence, or admitting the same for only limited purposes, offered at the June 8, 2023 Hearing?

- H. Alternatively, did the bankruptcy court err by overruling Appellant’s objections to Appellees’ evidence offered at the June 8, 2023 Hearing?

- I. Alternatively, did the bankruptcy court err by excluding Appellant’s experts’ testimony?

[See Dkt. No. 3853; *see also* Dkt. Nos. 3903-04].

- J. Alternatively, did the bankruptcy court err by striking Appellant’s proffer of its excluded experts’ testimony from the record?

[See Dkt. No. 3869].

- K. Alternatively, if the bankruptcy court correctly determined that its “hybrid” *Barton* analysis controls, did the bankruptcy court err in determining that Appellant had not asserted colorable claims under that “hybrid” analysis including, but not limited to, its findings that:

1. there is no evidence to support that Seery shared material non-public information with the Claims Purchasers;
2. there is no evidence to support the alleged quid pro quo;
3. the material shared was *public* information; and/or
4. the Claims Purchasers had sufficient and lawful reasons to pay the amounts paid

for the purchased claims.

[See Dkt. Nos. 3903-04].

- L. Did the bankruptcy court err in finding that Appellant is controlled by Dondero, and, as such, Appellant “cannot show that it is pursuing the Proposed Claims for a proper purpose”?
- M. Alternatively, does sufficient evidence support the bankruptcy court’s evidentiary findings made pursuant to its “hybrid” *Barton* analysis?
- N. Did the bankruptcy court err in denying an expedited hearing on Appellant’s Motion for Leave? [See Dkt. 3713].
- O. Does the bankruptcy court’s use of a new “colorability” standard to determine if claims by non-debtors against other non-debtors may proceed violate *Stern v. Marshall* and its progeny?
- P. Did the bankruptcy court err in denying Appellant’s Motion to Alter or Amend Order, to Amend or Make Additional Findings, for Relief from Order, or Alternatively, for New Trial under Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure 7052, 9023, and 9024 including, but not limited to by:
 - 1. declining to consider disclosures that demonstrated that Appellant is “in the money”—an issue pertinent to the court’s erroneous standing decisions; and
 - 2. concluding that the disclosures failed to reinforce Appellant’s standing to pursue the claims presented?

[Dkt. 3936].

II.
DESIGNATION OF ITEMS FOR INCLUSION
IN THE APPELLATE RECORD

Vol. 1
1. Notice of Appeal

- a. Notice of Appeal [Dkt. 3906];
- b. Amended Notice of Appeal [Dkt. 3908]; and
- c. Second Amended Notice of Appeal [Dkt. 3945]

2. The judgment, order, or decree appealed from:

- a. Memorandum Opinion and Order Pursuant to Plan “Gatekeeper Provision” and Pre-Confirmation “Gatekeeper Orders”: Denying Hunter Mountain Investment

000835
000940

Trust's Emergency Motion for Leave to File Adversary Proceedings [Dkts. 3903 & 3904]; and

001045

- b. Order Denying Motion of Hunter Mountain Investment Trust Seeking Relief Pursuant to Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure 7052, 9023, and 9024 [Dkt. 3936].

3. Docket sheet.

001049

- a. Bankruptcy Case No. 19-34054

4. Other Items to be included:

- a. HMIT hereby designates the following items in the record on appeal from Cause No. 19-34054-sgj11:

Vol. 2	FILE DATE	DOCKET NO. (INCLUDING ALL ATTACHMENTS AND APPENDICES)	DESCRIPTION
001594	01/22/2021	1808	Fifth Amended Plan of Reorganization of Highland Capital Management, L.P. (As Modified)
001660	02/22/2021	1943	Order (I) Confirming the Fifth Amended Plan of Reorganization of Highland Capital Management, L.P. (as Modified) and (II) Granting Related Relief
001821	09/09/2022	3503	Motion to Conform Plan filed by Highland Capital Management, L.P.
001830	02/27/203	3671	Memorandum Opinion and Order on Reorganized Debtor's Motion to Conform Plan
Vol. 3 001849	03/28/2023	3699 (3699-1 — 3699-5)	HMIT Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding and Attached Verified Adversary Complaint
Vol. 4 002236	03/28/2023	3700 (3700-1)	HMIT Motion for Expedited Hearing on Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding
002243	03/30/2023	3704	Farallon, Stonehill, Jessup and Muck Objection to Motion for Expedited Hearing
002248	03/30/2023	3705	HMIT Amended Certificate of Conference

Vol. 5 002251	03/30/2023	3706	HMIT Amended Certificate of Conference
002254	03/30/2023	3707	Highland's Response in Opposition to Emergency Motion for Leave
002262	03/30/2023	3708 (3708-1 — 3708-8)	Declaration of John Morris in Support of the Highland Parties' Objection to Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Opposed Application for Expedited Hearing on Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding
002348	03/31/2023	3712	HMIT Reply in Support of Application for Expedited Hearing
002355	03/31/2023	3713	Order Denying Motion for Expedited Hearing
002358	04/04/2023	3718 (3718-1 — 3718-4)	HMIT Motion for Leave to File Appeal
002391	04/04/2023	3719 (3719-1)	HMIT Motion for Expedited Hearing on Motion for Leave to File Appeal
002398	04/05/2023	3720	Order Denying HMIT's Opposed Motion for Expedited Hearing
002400	04/05/2023	3721 (3721-1 — 3721-2) Thru Vol. 7	HMIT Notice of Appeal
Vol. 8 002826	04/06/2023	3726 (3726-1) Thru Vol. 9	Certificate of Mailing regarding HMIT Notice of Appeal
Vol. 9 003257	04/07/2023	3731	Notice of Docketing Transmittal of Notice of Appeal
003260	04/13/2023	3738 (3738-1)	Highland's Opposed Emergency Motion to Modify and Fix a Briefing Schedule and Set a Hearing Date with Respect to HMIT's Emergency Motion for Leave
003270	04/13/2023	3739	Highland's Motion for Expedited Hearing
003278	04/13/2023	3740	Joinder to Highland's Emergency Motion to Modify and Fix Briefing Schedule and Set Hearing Date With Respect to Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding filed by Farallon

		Capital Management, LLC, Jessup Holdings LLC, Muck Holdings LLC, Stonehill Capital Management LLC	
1	04/13/2023	3741	Notice of Hearing for 04/24/2023 at 1:30 PM
6	04/13/2023	3742	Amended Notice of Hearing for 04/24/2023 at 1:30 PM
11	04/13/2023	3745	Notice of Appearance and Request for Notice by Omar Jesus Alaniz filed by James P. Seery Jr.
94	04/15/2023	3747	Joinder by James P. Seery Jr. to Highland's Emergency Motion to Modify and Fix Briefing Schedule and Set Hearing Date with Respect to Hunter Mountain Investment Trusts Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding
6	04/17/2023	3748	HMIT's Response and Reservation of Rights
9	04/19/2023	3751	Notice of Status Conference
02	04/21/2023	3758	HMIT's Objection Regarding Evidentiary Hearing and Brief Concerning Gatekeeper Proceedings Relating to "Colorability"
1	04/21/2023	3759	HMIT's Notice of Rescheduling Hearing
14	04/21/2023	3761	HMIT's Objection Regarding Evidentiary Hearing and Brief Concerning Gatekeeper Proceedings Relating to "Colorability" ³
23	04/23/2023	3760 (3760-1)	HMIT's Supplement to Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding and Attached Verified Adversary Complaint
8	04/25/2023	3765	Transcript of Hearing held on 04/24/2023
30	05/11/2023	3780	Objection to Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's (i) Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding; and (ii) Supplement to Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding filed by Farallon Capital Management, LLC, Jessup Holdings LLC, Muck

³ A duplicate of Doc 3758.

Vol. 10 003458		Holdings LLC, Stonehill Capital Management LLC
	05/11/2023 3781	Order Fixing Briefing Scheduling and Hearing Date with Respect to HMIT's Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding as Supplemented
003463	05/11/2023 3783	Highland and Seery's Joint Response to HMIT's Emergency Motion for Leave
Vol. 11 003537	05/11/2023 3784 (3784-1 — 3784-46)	Declaration of John Morris in Support of Highland Parties' Joint Response
Vol. 17 004665	05/18/2023 3785	HMIT's Reply in Support of Emergency Motion for Leave to File Adversary Proceeding
004712	05/22/2023 3787	Order Pertaining to the Hearing on Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Motion for Leave to File Adversary Proceeding [DE##3699 & 3760]
004714	05/24/2023 3788 (3788-1 — 3788-5)	HMIT's Emergency Motion for Expedited Discovery or, Alternatively, for Continuance of June 8, 2023 Hearing
004808	05/24/2023 3789	HMIT's Application for Expedited Hearing
004813	05/24/2023 3790	Order Pertaining to the Hearing on Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Motion for Leave to File Adversary Proceeding [DE##3699 & 3760]
004836	05/25/2023 3791 (3791-1 — 3791-5)	HMIT's Emergency Motion for Expedited Discovery or, Alternatively, for Continuance of June 8, 2023 Hearing
Vol. 18 004930	05/25/2023 3792	Order Setting Expedited Hearing
004931	05/25/2023 3795	Objection to Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Emergency Motion for Expedited Discovery or, Alternatively, for Continuance of June 8, 2023 Hearing filed by Farallon Capital Management, LLC, Jessup Holdings LLC, Muck Holdings LLC, Stonehill Capital Management LLC

Vol. 18 004939	05/25/2023	3798 (3798-1)	Highland Parties' Joint Response in Opposition to HMIT's Emergency Motion for Expedited Discovery
004959	05/26/2023	3800	Order Regarding Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Emergency Motion for Expedited Discovery or, Alternatively, for Continuance of the June 8, 2023 Hearing
004961	05/28/2023	3801	Order Regarding Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Emergency Motion for Expedited Discovery or, Alternatively, for Continuance of the June 8, 2023 Hearing
004984	06/05/2023	3815 (3815-1)	Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding
005049	06/05/2023	3816 (3816-1)	Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding
005114	06/05/2023	3817 (3817-1 — 3817-5)	Highland Parties' Witness and Exhibit List with Respect to Evidentiary Hearing on June 8, 2023
Vol. 26 006608	06/05/2023	3818 (3818-1 — 3818-9)	HMIT's Witness and Exhibit List in Connection with its Emergency Motion for Leave to File Verified Adversary Proceeding, and Supplement
Vol. 39 009273	06/07/2023	3820	Highland Parties' Joint Motion to Exclude Testimony and Documents of Scott Van Meter and Steve Pully
009290	06/07/2023	3821 (3821-1 — 3821-3)	Declaration in Support of Highland Parties' Joint Motion to Exclude Testimony and Documents of Scott Van Meter and Steve Pully
009416	06/07/2023	3822 (3822-1)	HMIT's Unopposed Motion to File Exhibit Under Seal [WITHDRAWN]
009424	06/07/2023	3823	Joinder to Joint Motion to Exclude Testimony and Documents of Scott Van Meter and Steve Pully filed by Farallon Capital Management, LLC, Jessup Holdings LLC, Muck Holdings LLC, Stonehill Capital Management LLC

06/07/2023	3824	HMIT's Objections to the Highland Parties' Exhibit and Witness List
06/08/2023	3828	HMIT's Response to Highland Claimant Trust and James P. Seery, Jr.'s Joint Motion to Exclude Testimony and Documents of Experts Scott Van Meter and Steve Pully
06/09/2023	3837	Request for transcript regarding hearing held on 06/08/2023
06/12/2023	3838	Court admitted exhibits on hearing June 8, 2023 (See Docket Entry Nos. 3817 & 3818)
06/12/2023	3841	Highland Parties' Reply in Further Support of their Joint Motion to Exclude Testimony and Documents of Scott Van Meter and Steve Pully
06/12/2023	3842 (3842-1)	Claim Purchasers' Joinder to Highland Capital Management, L.P., Highland Claimant Trust, and James P. Seery Jr.'s Reply in Further Support of Their Joint Motion to Exclude Testimony and Documents of Scott Van Meter and Steve Pully filed by Farallon Capital Management, LLC, Jessup Holdings LLC, Muck Holdings LLC, Stonehill Capital Management LLC
06/13/2023	3843	Transcript regarding Hearing Held 06/08/2023
06/13/2023	3844	Transcript regarding Hearing Held 05/26/2023
06/13/2023	3845	HMIT's Request for Oral Hearing or, Alternatively, a Schedule for Evidentiary Proffer
06/13/2023	3846	Response in Opposition to Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Request for Oral Argument or, Alternatively, a Schedule for Evidentiary Proffer filed by Debtor Highland Capital Management, L.P., Other Professional Highland Claimant Trust, Creditor James P. Seery Jr.
06/13/2023	3847	HMIT's Reply to the Highland Parties' Response to Request for Oral Hearing
06/16/2023	3853	Memorandum Opinion and Order Granting Joint Motion to Exclude Expert Evidence

Vol. 42 009928	06/16/2023	3854	Memorandum Opinion and Order Granting Joint Motion to Exclude Expert Evidence
009944	06/19/2023	3858 (3858-1 — 3858-2)	Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Evidentiary Proffer Pursuant to Rule 103(a)(2) ⁴
010013	06/23/2023	3860	The Highland Parties' Objections to and Motion to Strike Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Purported Proffer
010023	06/23/2023	3861	Claim Purchasers' Joinder to the Highland Parties' Objections and Motion to Strike Hunter Mountain Investment Trust's Purported Proffer
010025	07/05/2023	3869	Order Striking HMIT's Evidentiary Proffer Pursuant to Rule 103(a)(2) and Limiting Briefing
010029	07/06/2023	3872	Notice of Filing of the Current Balance Sheet of the Highland Claimant Trust filed by Debtor Highland Capital Management, L.P. and the Highland Claimant Trust
010035	07/21/2023	3888	Post-Confirmation Report for Highland Capital Management, LP for the Quarter Ending June 30, 2023 filed by Highland Capital Management, L.P.
010047	07/21/2023	3889	Post-Confirmation Report for Highland Capital Management, LP for the Quarter Ending June 30, 2023 filed by the Highland Claimant Trust
010059	08/17/2023	3901	Withdrawal of HMIT's Unopposed Motion to File Exhibit Under Seal filed by Creditor Hunter Mountain Investment Trust
Vol. 43 010062	09/08/2023	3905 (3905-1 — 3905-6)	Motion to Alter or Amend Order, to Amend or Make Additional Findings, for Relief from Order, or, Alternatively, for New Trial Under Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure 7052, 9023, and 9024 and Incorporated Relief Filed by Creditor Hunter Mountain Investment Trust

⁴ HMIT understands that the Court struck this proffer in docket entry 3869. Because the proffer appears to remain on the record and to avoid any argument that HMIT has failed its burden to designate the record, HMIT designates this docket entry out of an abundance of caution.

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09/11/2023	3907	Clerk's Correspondence regarding HMIT's Notice of Appeal
09/22/2023	3928	Notice Regarding Appeal and Pending Post-Judgment Motion filed by HMIT

B. Exhibits.

Further, the Parties submitted hearing exhibits. HMIT designates for inclusion in the record for appeal all the hearing exhibits submitted to the Court, which were all electronically filed and are in the Court's record and are a part of this Appellate Record. (Docs. 3817 and 3818). The following exhibits are submitted and included in the Court's record:

<u>HMIT Exhibits</u> (Dkts. 3818, 3818-1, 3818-2, 3818-3, 3818-4, 3818-5, 3818-6, 3818-7, 3818-8, and 3818-9)
HMIT Exhibits 1-4, 6-80
<u>HCM Exhibits</u> (Dkts. 3817, 3817-1, 3817-2, 3817-3, 3817-4, 3817-5)
HCM Exhibits 2-15, 25-34, 36, 38-42, 45-46, 51, 59-60, 100

Dated: October 23, 2023

Respectfully Submitted,

**PARSONS MCENTIRE MCCLEARY
PLLC**

By: /s/ Sawnie A. McEntire
Sawnie A. McEntire
Texas State Bar No. 13590100
smcentire@pmmlaw.com
1700 Pacific Avenue, Suite 4400
Dallas, Texas 75201
Telephone: (214) 237-4300
Facsimile: (214) 237-4340

Roger L. McCleary
Texas State Bar No. 13393700
rmccleary@pmmlaw.com
One Riverway, Suite 1800
Houston, Texas 77056
Telephone: (713) 960-7315
Facsimile: (713) 960-7347

*Attorneys for Hunter Mountain Investment
Trust*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

A true and correct copy of the foregoing document was served via ECF notification on October 23, 2023, on all parties receiving electronic notification.

/s/ Sawnie A. McEntire
Sawnie A. McEntire

1 As you start to look towards the confirmation and exit from
2 the case, things that would be appropriate, that, you know,
3 would always be something you would want to look at would be
4 exculpation language, releases. And in this particular case,
5 the injunction, or what Mr. Seery earlier referred to as the
6 gatekeeper clause, is something that is very important for
7 directors, both, you know, as they're thinking through it and
8 as they emerge.

9 Q All right. Let's shift now to this case, with that
10 background. How did you learn about this case?

11 A I had a party who was involved in the case reach out to me
12 in early part of December of 2019 to see if I would be
13 interested in getting involved. I think that was about the
14 time -- it was after -- as I recall, it was after the case had
15 been moved to Dallas and when there was a -- consideration of
16 either a Chapter 11 or a Chapter 7 trustee. I can't remember
17 exactly which it was. But there was talk about a motion to
18 bring on a trustee and get rid of all the management and the
19 like and such.

20 Q Can you describe in as much detail as you can recall the
21 facts and circumstances that led to your appointment as an
22 independent director?

23 A Sure. I, as I said, I had -- early December, I had an --
24 one of the parties involved -- had, probably within the next
25 week, probably two or three others -- that reached out to see

1 if I would be interested in participating. I met with the
2 Creditors' Committee or -- I'm not sure if it was all the
3 members, but representatives of the Creditors' Committee,
4 along with counsel, and I believe financial advisors were
5 involved. They walked me through the issues. They wanted to
6 hear about my C.V. Quite a few of them knew me, knew me well,
7 but others wanted to hear about my background and how I would
8 look at things as an independent director.

9 That went through into the latter part of December. I
10 knew that they were talking to other parties. I think it was
11 probably right around the first of the year or so that I was
12 informed, maybe a little bit earlier than that, that I was
13 informed that Mr. Seery was one of the other parties that they
14 were talking to, and Mr. Seery and I were put in touch with
15 each other. I had worked with Mr. Seery back probably nine
16 years earlier when I was the CEO of FGIC. He was involved in
17 a matter that we were restructuring, and so knew him a little
18 bit and was comfortable working with him as a, you know,
19 another independent director.

20 Then we took the time that we had to to -- or, I took the
21 time to -- from the beginning, you know, the early part of
22 December, look at the docket, understand what was taking
23 place. I -- in addition, I met with the company and its
24 advisors, in-house counsel, the folks at DSI who were at the
25 time the CRO and the company's counsel to better understand

1 some of the issues.

2 Mr. Seery and I, as I said, were both selected, and we
3 went through the process of, I guess, breaking the tie, I
4 think, if I could say it that way, amongst the creditors and
5 the Debtor as to who would be the third member of the board.
6 And we were given the opportunity to go out, interview, and
7 select the third member, which resulted in Russell Nelms'
8 appointment to the board. And also during that time, we were
9 given the opportunity to have some input -- not a hundred
10 percent input, but some input -- on the January 9th order that
11 -- the January 9, 2020 order that was put in place appointing
12 us and giving us some of the protections that we felt were
13 appropriate and necessary in this case.

14 Q All right. We'll get to that in a moment, but during this
15 diligence period, did you form an understanding as to why an
16 independent board was being formed, why it was being sought?

17 A Yes. There was, my words, there was a lot of distrust
18 between the creditors and the management -- not the CRO, but
19 the prior management of the company -- and there had been a
20 motion brought both to obviously bring the case back to Dallas
21 from I think it was originally in Delaware and then there was
22 a motion to seek, you know, to remove management and put in a
23 trustee.

24 There had been a dozen years of litigation with one party,
25 about eight or nine years with another major party, and

1 several other of the major creditors were litigants. The
2 other, as I understood, the other creditors, main creditors in
3 the case were all lawyers who had not yet gotten paid for the
4 litigation work that they had done. And so it was obvious
5 that this was a very -- a highly-litigious situation.

6 Q In addition to speaking with the various constituents, did
7 you do any diligence on your own to try to understand the case
8 before you accepted the appointment?

9 A Yes. I went to the docket to look at all the -- not every
10 single thing that had been filed, but to try and look at all
11 the key, relevant items that had been filed, get a better
12 understanding of what was out there. Looked at some of the
13 initial filings of the company in terms of the, you know, the
14 creditors, to understand who the creditor base was per the
15 schedules that had been filed. Looked at the -- some of the
16 various pleadings that had been put in place.

17 Q Did you form a view as to the causes of the bankruptcy
18 filing?

19 A Litigation. That was my clear view. This company had
20 been in litigation with multiple parties, various different
21 parties, since around 2008. Generally, you would see
22 litigation like the types that were, you know, that were here,
23 you know, you'd litigate for a while, then you'd try and
24 settle it.

25 It did not appear to me that there was any intention on

1 the -- the Debtor to settle these litigations, but would
2 rather just continue the process and proceed forward on the
3 litigation until the very last minute. And so it was obvious
4 that this was going to -- that the Debtor was a, as I said, a
5 highly-litigious shop, and that was one of the causes,
6 obviously, the cause of the filing, along with the fact that
7 judgments were about to be entered against the Debtor.

8 Q All right. And in January 2020, do you recall that's when
9 the agreement was reached between the Debtor, the Committee,
10 and Mr. Dondero?

11 A Yeah, it was the first week or so, which resulted in a
12 hearing on I believe it was January 9th in front of Judge
13 Jernigan.

14 Q And as a part of that -- I think you testified at that
15 hearing. Do I have that right?

16 A I don't recall if I did. I might have. I might have
17 testified at a subsequent hearing. But --

18 Q But was --

19 A -- I was in the courtroom for that hearing, yes.

20 Q Was it part of that process by which you accepted the
21 appointment as independent director?

22 A I accepted it based upon the order that had been
23 negotiated amongst the parties, the creditors, the Debtor, Mr.
24 Dondero, and others. And that was the key thing that was --
25 and approved by the Court on that date. And that was key for

1 my acceptance of the role as an independent director.

2 Q And did you and the other prospective independent
3 directors participate in the negotiation of the substance of
4 the agreement?

5 A We did. We didn't have a hundred percent say over it, but
6 we were able to get our voices heard. As Mr. Seery testified
7 earlier, he was instrumental in coming up with an idea about
8 how to put in place the injunction, you know, the -- I think
9 he referred to it as the gatekeeper injunction, which was
10 obviously in this case very critical to all three of us: Mr.
11 Seery, Mr. Nelms, and myself.

12 Q Can you describe for the Court kind of the issues of
13 concern to you and the other prospective board members? What
14 was it that you were focused on in terms of the negotiations?

15 A Well, obviously, indemnification was important, but that
16 was something that was going to be granted. Having the right
17 to obtain separate D&O insurance just for the three directors
18 was important. We were concerned that Strand Advisors, Inc.
19 really had no assets, and so we wanted to make sure that the
20 Debtor was going to get -- was going to basically guarantee
21 the indemnification.

22 The -- because of the litigious nature and what we had
23 heard from all of the various parties involved, including
24 people inside the Debtor who we had talked with, that it would
25 be something that was important for us to make sure that the

1 injunction, the gatekeeper injunction was put in place.

2 Q And can you elaborate a little bit on I think you said you
3 had done some diligence and you had formed a view as to the
4 causes of the bankruptcy filing, but did this case present any
5 specific concerns or issues that you and the board members had
6 to address perhaps above and beyond what you experienced in
7 some of the other cases you described?

8 A Well, as I said earlier, the fact that the litigation --
9 the various litigations with the creditors have been going on
10 for what I viewed as an inordinate amount of years, and that
11 it was clear from my diligence that I had done that this had
12 been directed by Mr. Dondero, to keep this moving forward in
13 the litigation, and to, in essence, just, you know, never give
14 up on the litigation.

15 It was important that the types of protections that we
16 were afforded in the January 9th order were put in place,
17 because we -- none of us -- none of the three of us, and
18 myself in particular, did not want to be in a position where
19 we would be sued and harassed through lawsuits for the next,
20 you know, ten years or so. That's not something anybody would
21 want to sign up for.

22 Q All right. Let's look at the January 9th order and the
23 specific provisions I think that you're alluding to.

24 MR. MORRIS: Can we call up Exhibit 5Q, please?

25 THE WITNESS: Pardon me while I put my glasses on to

1 read this.

2 MR. MORRIS: All right. And if we can go to
3 Paragraph 4.

4 BY MR. MORRIS:

5 Q Is that the paragraph, sir, that was intended to address
6 the concern that you just articulated about Strand not having
7 any assets of its own?

8 A Yes, it is.

9 Q And can you just describe for the Court how that
10 particular provision addressed that concern?

11 A Sure. Since we were directors of Strand, which is the
12 general partner of the Debtor, we felt it was important that
13 the general -- that Highland, the Debtor, would provide the
14 guaranty on indemnification, because Highland had the assets
15 to back up the indemnification.

16 It was also pretty clear, from my experience in having
17 placed D&O insurance, you know, over the last 25-30 years,
18 that if there was no, you know, opportunity for
19 indemnification, putting in place insurance would be very
20 difficult or exorbitantly expensive. So having this
21 indemnification by Highland was a very important piece of the
22 order that we were seeking.

23 Q And the next piece is the insurance piece in Paragraph 5.
24 Do you see that?

25 A I do.

1 Q Did you have any involvement in the Debtor's efforts to
2 obtain D&O insurance for the independent board?

3 A I did.

4 Q Can you just describe for the Court what role you played
5 and what issues came up as the Debtor sought to obtain that
6 insurance?

7 A Sure. The Debtors had been looking to get an insurance
8 policy in place. They were not able to do that. I happen to
9 have worked with an insurance broker on D&O situations in some
10 very difficult situations over the years and brought them into
11 the mix. They were able to go out to the market and find a
12 policy that would cover us, the -- kind of the key components
13 of that policy, though, were, number one, the guaranty that
14 HCMLP would give -- I'm sorry, the guaranty that HCMLP would
15 give to Strand's obligations, and also the -- I'll call it the
16 gatekeeper provision was very important because these parties
17 did not want to have -- they wanted to have what was referred
18 to, commonly referred to as the Dondero Exclusion.

19 So while we were -- we purchased a policy that covered us,
20 it did have an exclusion, unless there were no assets left,
21 and then the what I'll call -- we refer to as kind of a Side A
22 policy would kick in.

23 Q Okay. What do you mean by the Dondero Exclusion?

24 A The insurers did not want to cover the -- any litigation
25 that Mr. Dondero would bring against directors. It was pretty

1 commonly known in the marketplace that Mr. Dondero was very
2 litigious, and insurers were not willing to write the
3 insurance without the protections that this order afforded
4 because they did not want to be hit with frivolous -- hit with
5 claims on the policy for frivolous litigation that might be
6 brought.

7 MR. TAYLOR: Your Honor, this is Mr. Taylor. I've
8 got to object to the last answer. He testified as to what the
9 insurers' belief was and what they would or would not do based
10 upon their own knowledge. It's not within his personal
11 knowledge. And therefore we'd move to strike.

12 THE COURT: I overrule that objection.

13 MR. MORRIS: Your Honor?

14 THE COURT: I overrule the objection.

15 MR. MORRIS: Thank you. Thank you, Your Honor.

16 BY MR. MORRIS:

17 Q Mr. Dubel, can you explain to the Court, in your work in
18 trying to secure the D&O insurance, what rule the gatekeeper
19 provision played in the Debtor's ability to get that?

20 A Based upon my discussions with the insurance broker, who I
21 have worked with for 25-plus years, had that gatekeeper
22 provision not been put in place, we would not have been able
23 to get insurance.

24 Q All right. Let's look at the gatekeeper provision.

25 MR. MORRIS: Can we go down to Paragraph 10, please?

1 Perfect. Right there.

2 BY MR. MORRIS:

3 Q Is this gatekeeper provision, is this also the source of
4 the exculpation that you referred to?

5 A Yes.

6 Q And what's your understanding of how the exculpation and
7 gatekeeper functions together?

8 A Well, my apologies, I'm not an attorney, so just from a
9 business point of view, the way I look at this is that, you
10 know, obviously, we're -- you know, the directors are not
11 protected from willful misconduct or gross negligence, but any
12 negligence -- you know, claims brought under negligence and
13 the likes of such, and things that might be considered
14 frivolous, would have to first go to Your Honor in the
15 Bankruptcy Court for a review to determine if they were claims
16 that should be entitled to be brought.

17 Q If you take a look at the provision, right, do you
18 understand that nobody can bring a claim without -- in little
19 i, it says, first determining -- without the Court first
20 determining, after notice, that such claim or cause of action
21 represents a colorable claim of willful misconduct or gross
22 negligence against an indirect -- independent director. Do
23 you see that?

24 A I do.

25 Q Is it your understanding that parties can only bring

1 claims for gross negligence or willful misconduct if the Court
2 makes a determination that there is a colorable claim?

3 A That's my understanding.

4 Q And the second --

5 A I think they have the right -- I think they have the right
6 to go to the Court to ask if they can bring the claim, but the
7 Court has to make the determination that it's a colorable
8 claim for willful misconduct or gross negligence.

9 Q And if the Court -- is it your understanding that if the
10 Court doesn't find that there is a colorable claim of willful
11 misconduct or gross negligence, then the claim can't be
12 brought against the independent directors?

13 A That is my understanding, yes.

14 Q And was -- taken together, Paragraphs 4, 5, and 10, were
15 they of importance to you and the other independent directors
16 before accepting the position?

17 A They were absolutely critical to me and definitely
18 critical to the other directors, because we all negotiated
19 that together, and it would -- I don't -- I don't think any of
20 the three of us would have taken on this role if those
21 paragraphs had not been included in the order.

22 Q Okay. Just speaking for yourself personally, is there any
23 chance you would have accepted the appointment without all
24 three of those provisions?

25 A I would not have.

1 Q And why is that? In this particular case, why did you
2 personally believe that you needed all three of those
3 provisions?

4 A Well, you know, people like myself, you know, someone
5 who's coming in as an independent director, come in in a
6 fiduciary capacity. And, you know, we take on risks. Now,
7 granted, in a Chapter 11 case, as the saying goes, you know,
8 it's a lot safer because everything has to be approved by the
9 Court, but there are still opportunities for parties to, in
10 essence, have mischief going on and bring nuisance lawsuits
11 that would take a lot of time and effort away from either the
12 role of our job of restructuring the entity or post-
13 restructuring, would just be nuisance things that would cost
14 us money. And we, you know, I did not want to be involved in
15 that situation, knowing the litigious nature of Mr. Dondero
16 from the research that I had done, you know, the diligence
17 that I had done. I did not want to subject myself to that.
18 And it has proven an appropriate and very solid order because
19 of the conduct of Mr. Dondero, as Mr. Seery has testified to
20 earlier.

21 Q Do you have a view as to what the likely effect would be
22 on future corporate restructurings if you and your fellow
23 directors weren't able to obtain the type of protection
24 afforded in the January 9th order?

25 A I think it would be very difficult to find qualified

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1 people who would be willing to serve in these types of
2 positions if they knew they had a target on their backs. You
3 know, it was something that was clear to us, to Mr. Seery, Mr.
4 Nelms, myself at the time, that if we had a target -- we felt
5 like we would have a target on our back if we didn't have
6 these protections.

7 It just wasn't worth the risk, the stress, the
8 uncertainty, the potential cost to us. And so I don't think
9 anybody else would be, you know, willing to take on the roles
10 as an independent director with the facts and circumstances
11 and the players involved in this particular case.

12 MR. MORRIS: I have no further questions, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: All right. Pass the witness. Let's see.
14 You went -- I'm going to give a time. You went 32 minutes.
15 So, for cross of this witness, I'm going to limit it to an
16 aggregate of 32 minutes. Who wants to go first?

17 MR. DRAPER: Your Honor, this is Douglas Draper.
18 I'll be happy to go first.

19 THE COURT: All right.

20 CROSS-EXAMINATION

21 BY MR. DRAPER:

22 Q Mr. Dubel, prior to your engagement, did you happen to
23 read the case of *Pacific Lumber*?

24 A I did not.

25 Q And were you advised about *Pacific Lumber* by somebody

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1 other than a -- your lawyer?

2 A I'm not familiar with the case at all, Mr. Draper.

3 Q Are you aware, and you've been around a long time, that
4 different circuits have different rules for liabilities of
5 officers, directors, and people like that?

6 A I am aware that there are different, I don't know what the
7 right term is, but precedents, I guess, in different circuits
8 for any number of things, whether it's a sale motion or
9 protections of officers and directors or anything. So each
10 circuit has its own unique situations.

11 Q And one last question. On a go-forward, after -- if this
12 plan is confirmed and on the effective date, you will not have
13 any role whatsoever as an officer or director of the new
14 general partner, correct?

15 A I have not been asked to. As Mr. Seery testified, he may
16 ask for assistance or just -- in most situations that I'm
17 involved with, I may have a continuing role just as a -- I'll
18 call it an advisor or somebody to provide a history. But at
19 this point in time, I have not been asked to have any
20 involvement.

21 Q And based on your experience, you know that there's a
22 different liability for a director and an officer versus
23 somebody who is an advisor?

24 MR. MORRIS: Objection to the form of the question.
25 No foundation.

1 THE COURT: Overruled.

2 MR. DRAPER: Mr. Dubel has shown --

3 THE COURT: Mr. Dubel, you can answer if you know.

4 MR. DRAPER: Mr. Dubel, you can answer.

5 THE WITNESS: I'm sorry, Your Honor, I didn't hear
6 you say overruled. Thank you.

7 Mr. Draper, I apologize, could you repeat the question?

8 BY MR. DRAPER:

9 Q The question is you know from your experience that there's
10 a different liability for somebody who is an officer or
11 director versus somebody who's an advisor?

12 A Yes, that's my experience, which is why in several
13 situations post-reorganization, while I have not been involved
14 per se, and I use the term involved meaning, you know, on a
15 day-to-day basis, if someone asks me to assist, I'll usually
16 ask them to bring me in as a non -- an unpaid employee or a,
17 you know, a nominally-amount-paid employee, so that I would be
18 protected by whatever protections the company might provide.

19 MR. DRAPER: I have nothing further for this witness,
20 Your Honor.

21 THE COURT: All right. Other cross?

22 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Your Honor.

23 MR. RUKAVINA: Yes, Your Honor.

24 MR. TAYLOR: Oh, go ahead, Davor.

25 MR. RUKAVINA: No, Clay, go ahead.

1 CROSS-EXAMINATION

2 BY MR. TAYLOR:

3 Q Mr. Dubel, this is Clay Taylor here on behalf on Mr.
4 Dondero. I believe you had previously testified in response
5 to questions from Mr. Morris that Mr. Dondero had engaged in a
6 pattern of litigious behavior; is that correct?

7 A I believe that's the testimony I gave, yes.

8 Q Okay. And please give me the specific examples of which
9 cases you believe he has engaged in overly-litigious behavior.

10 A Well, all of the cases that resulted in creditors, large
11 creditors in our bankruptcy. That would be the UBS situation,
12 the Crusader situation which became the Redeemer Committee,
13 litigation with Mr. Daugherty, with Acis and Mr. Terry. And
14 as I mentioned earlier, I'd, you know, been informed by
15 members of the management team that it was Mr. Dondero's style
16 to just litigate until the very end to try and grind people
17 down.

18 Q Okay. Was Mr. Dondero or a Highland entity the plaintiff
19 in the UBS case?

20 A No, but what was referred -- what I was referring to was
21 the nature in which he defended it and went overboard and
22 refused to ever, you know, try and settle things in a manner
23 that would have gotten things done. And just looking at,
24 having been involved in the restructuring industry for the
25 last 40 years, as I said, almost 40 years, and been involved

1 in many, many litigious situations, it's obvious when someone
2 is litigious, whether they're the plaintiff or the defendant.

3 Q So are you personally familiar with the settlement
4 negotiations in the UBS case that happened pre-bankruptcy,
5 then?

6 A I have been informed that there were settlement
7 negotiations, and subsequently determined, through discussions
8 with the parties, that they weren't really close to -- to a
9 settlement.

10 Q But are you aware of --

11 A Mr. Dondero might have thought they were, but they were
12 not.

13 Q Okay. Would you be surprised to learn if UBS had offered
14 to settle pre-bankruptcy for \$7 million?

15 A As I understand, settlements -- settlement offers pre-
16 bankruptcy had a tremendous number of -- I don't know what the
17 right term is -- things tied to it and that clearly were never
18 going to get done.

19 Q Okay. When you say things were tied to it, what things
20 were tied to it?

21 A I don't know all of the settlement discussions that took
22 place, but what I was informed was that there were a lot of
23 conditions that were included in that. And it's -- if it had
24 been an offer of \$7 million and Mr. Dondero didn't settle for
25 that, there must have been a reason why. So, you know, since

1 the entities -- all of the entities within the Highland
2 Capital empire, if you'd call it that, were being sued for
3 almost a billion dollars.

4 Q Okay. And you say there was lots of conditions that were
5 tied to that. What were the conditions?

6 A As I said earlier, I wasn't informed of them on all the
7 prepetition settlements. That's just what I was told, there
8 was conditions.

9 Q Okay. And who were you told these things by?

10 A Both external counsel and internal counsel. Mr.
11 Ellington, Scott Ellington, and Isaac -- the litigation
12 counsel.

13 Q Okay. So --

14 A That's -- sorry.

15 Q Okay. In each of these cases, you were informed by your
16 views by statements that were made to you by other people?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Okay.

19 A Made -- and particularly made by members of management of
20 the Debtor, which is pretty informed.

21 Q Okay. Which members of management were those?

22 A As I just testified, it was Mr. Ellington, who was the
23 general -- the Debtor's general counsel, and Mr. Leventon,
24 Isaac Leventon, who was the -- I believe his title was
25 associate general counsel in charge of litigation.

1 Q Okay. Thank you.

2 MR. TAYLOR: No further questions.

3 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Rukavina?

4 CROSS-EXAMINATION

5 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

6 Q Mr. Dubel, we've never met, although I think we were on
7 the phone once together. I know you're a director, so you're
8 at the top, but having been in this case for more than a year,
9 you probably have some understanding of the assets that the
10 Debtor has, don't you?

11 A I do, but I'm not as facile with it as Mr. Seery,
12 obviously.

13 Q Sure. Is it true, to your understanding, that the Debtor
14 owns various equity interests in third-party companies?

15 A Either directly or indirectly. That's my understanding,
16 yes.

17 Q Okay. Have you heard of an entity called Highland Select
18 Equity Fund, LP?

19 A I have.

20 Q And is that a publicly-traded company?

21 A I'm not familiar with its nature there, no.

22 Q Do you know how much of the equity of that entity the
23 Debtor owns?

24 A I don't know off the top of my head, no.

25 Q And again, these may be unfair questions because you're at

1 the top, so I'm not trying to make you look foolish. I'm just
2 trying to see. Let me ask one more. Have you heard of
3 Wright, W-R-I-G-H-T, Limited?

4 MR. MORRIS: Objection, Your Honor. Beyond the
5 scope.

6 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, I can recall him on my
7 direct, then.

8 THE COURT: Yeah. I'll --

9 MR. RUKAVINA: But I'd just rather get it over with.

10 THE COURT: I'll allow it.

11 MR. MORRIS: All right. If we're going to get rid of
12 --

13 THE COURT: Overruled.

14 MR. MORRIS: No, that's fine.

15 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

16 Q Have you heard of Wright, W-R-I-G-H-T, Limited?

17 A I think I have, but I just don't recall it, Mr. Rukavina.
18 I'm sorry, Rukavina. Sorry.

19 Q It's okay. It's a --

20 A I'm looking at your chart here, at your name here, and it
21 looks like Drukavina, so I really apologize.

22 Q Believe it or not, it's actually a very famous name in
23 Croatia, although it means nothing here.

24 So, all of the entities that the Debtor owns equity in, I
25 guess you probably, just because, again, you're not in the

1 weeds, you can't tell us how much of that equity the Debtor
2 owns, can you?

3 A I can't individually, no. You know, Mr. Seery is our CEO
4 and he's responsible for the day-to-day, you know, issues. So
5 usually we look at it more on a consolidated basis and not in
6 the, you know, down in the weeds, as you refer to it, unless
7 something specific came up.

8 Q Well, would you remember whether, when Mr. Seery or the
9 prior CRO would provide you, as the board member, financial
10 reports, whether that included P&Ls and balance sheets and
11 financial reports for the entities that the Debtor owned
12 interests in?

13 A We might -- we would have seen certain consolidating
14 reports that might -- that would be, you know, consolidating
15 financial statements that would be P&Ls. Where we didn't
16 consolidate them, I'm not sure we saw the actual individual-
17 entity P&Ls on a regular basis. We might have seen them if
18 there was a transaction taking place. But again, you know, I
19 don't have -- I don't remember every single one of them, no.

20 Q And you would agree with me, sir, that the Pachulski law
21 firm is an excellent restructuring, reorganization, insolvency
22 law firm, wouldn't you?

23 A Yes, I would agree with you there.

24 Q Okay. And you would expect them to ensure that anything
25 that has to be filed with Her Honor is timely filed, wouldn't

1 you?

2 A I would expect that they would follow the rules.

3 Q Okay. And you have the utmost of confidence, I take it,
4 in your CRO, don't you?

5 A I have a tremendous amount of confidence in our CEO, who
6 also happens to hold the title of CRO, yes, if that's what
7 you're referring to as, Mr. Seery.

8 (Interruption.)

9 MR. RUKAVINA: John.

10 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

11 Q Okay, I think -- yeah, I think I heard that you have
12 tremendous confidence in the CEO, who happens to be the CRO,
13 right?

14 A Yes, that's the case.

15 MR. RUKAVINA: Thank you, Your Honor. I'll pass the
16 witness.

17 THE COURT: All right. Any other cross of Mr. Dubel?

18 All right. Mr. Morris, redirect?

19 MR. MORRIS: Yeah, just very briefly, Your Honor.

20 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

21 BY MR. MORRIS:

22 Q You were asked about that *Pacific Lumber* case, Mr. Dubel;
23 do you remember that?

24 A I do remember being asked about it.

25 Q And you weren't familiar with that case, right?

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1 A I'm not familiar with the name of the case, no.

2 Q But you did know that the exculpation and gatekeeping
3 provisions were going to be included in the order; is that
4 fair?

5 A I did.

6 Q And did you testify that you wouldn't have accepted the
7 position without it?

8 A I did testify that way.

9 Q And if you knew that you couldn't get those provisions in
10 the Fifth Circuit, would you ever accept a position as an
11 independent director in the Fifth Circuit on a go-forward
12 basis?

13 A Not in a situation such as this, no.

14 Q Okay. Okay.

15 MR. MORRIS: No further questions, Your Honor.

16 THE COURT: All right. Any recross on that narrow
17 redirect?

18 All right. Well, Mr. Dubel, you are excused from the
19 virtual witness stand.

20 THE WITNESS: Thank you, Your Honor.

21 THE COURT: All right. I want to go ahead and --

22 MR. DUBEL: Do you mind if I turn my video off?

23 THE COURT: I'm sorry, what?

24 MR. DUBEL: I said, do you mind if I turn my video
25 off?

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1 THE COURT: No, you may. That's fine.

2 MR. DUBEL: Thank you, Your Honor.

3 THE COURT: All right. I want to break now, unless
4 there's any quick housekeeping matter. Anything?

5 MR. MORRIS: No, Your Honor, but I would just ask
6 all parties to let me know by email if they have any
7 objections to any of the exhibits on the witness list that was
8 filed at Docket No. 1877, because I want to begin tomorrow by
9 putting into evidence the balance of our exhibits.

10 MR. RUKAVINA: And Your Honor, I was responsible for
11 this due to an internal mistake. The only ones I have an
12 objection to are -- is that 7? John, is that 7, right, 700 --

13 MR. MORRIS: Yes.

14 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, I only have an objection
15 to 70 and 7P, although I think -- think the Court has already
16 admitted 7P, so my objection is moot.

17 THE COURT: I have.

18 MR. RUKAVINA: Okay.

19 THE COURT: So, what --

20 MR. RUKAVINA: Then it would just be --

21 THE COURT: Go ahead.

22 MR. RUKAVINA: I'm sorry. It would just be 70.
23 Septuple O or whatever the word is.

24 THE COURT: All right. So I will go ahead and admit
25 7F through 7Q, with the exception of 70. Again, these appear

1 at Docket Entry 1877. And Mr. Morris, you can try to get in
2 70 the old-fashioned way if you want to.

3 MR. MORRIS: Yeah, I'll deal with 70 and the very
4 limited number of other objections at the beginning of
5 tomorrow's hearing.

6 THE COURT: All right.

7 (Debtor's Exhibits 7F through 7Q, with the exception of
8 70, are received into evidence.)

9 THE COURT: So we will reconvene at 9:30 Central time
10 tomorrow. I think we're going to hear from the Aon, the D&O
11 broker, Mr. Tauber; is that correct?

12 MR. MORRIS: That's right. And that should be
13 shorter than even Mr. Dubel.

14 THE COURT: All right. Well, we will see you at 9:30
15 in the morning. We are in recess.

16 MR. MORRIS: Thank you so much.

17 THE CLERK: All rise.

18 (Proceedings concluded at 5:09 p.m.)

19 --oOo--

20 CERTIFICATE

21 I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from
22 the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the
above-entitled matter.

23 **/s/ Kathy Rehling**

02/04/2021

24 _____
25 Kathy Rehling, CETD-444
Certified Electronic Court Transcriber

Date

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HMIT Exhibit No. 54

007836

IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
DALLAS DIVISION

In Re:) **Case No. 19-34054-sgj-11**
) Chapter 11
)
HIGHLAND CAPITAL) Dallas, Texas
MANAGEMENT, L.P.,) Wednesday, February 3, 2021
) 9:30 a.m. Docket
Debtor.)
) CONFIRMATION HEARING [1808]
) AGREED MOTION TO ASSUME [1624]
)
) *Continued from 02/02/2021*
)

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
BEFORE THE HONORABLE STACEY G.C. JERNIGAN,
UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY JUDGE.

WEBEX APPEARANCES:

For the Debtor: Jeffrey Nathan Pomerantz
PACHULSKI STANG ZIEHL & JONES, LLP
10100 Santa Monica Blvd.,
13th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90067-4003
(310) 277-6910

For the Debtor: John A. Morris
PACHULSKI STANG ZIEHL & JONES, LLP
780 Third Avenue, 34th Floor
New York, NY 10017-2024
(212) 561-7700

For the Debtors: Ira D. Kharasch
PACHULSKI STANG ZIEHL & JONES, LLP
10100 Santa Monica Blvd.,
13th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90067-4003
(310) 277-6910

For the Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors: Matthew A. Clemente
SIDLEY AUSTIN, LLP
One South Dearborn Street
Chicago, IL 60603
(312) 853-7539

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1 APPEARANCES, cont'd.:

2 For James Dondero: Clay M. Taylor
3 BONDS ELLIS EPPICH SCHAFER
4 JONES, LLP
5 420 Throckmorton Street,
6 Suite 1000
7 Fort Worth, TX 76102
8 (817) 405-6900

9 For Get Good Trust and Douglas S. Draper
10 Dugaboy Investment Trust: HELLER, DRAPER & HORN, LLC
11 650 Poydras Street, Suite 2500
12 New Orleans, LA 70130
13 (504) 299-3300

14 For Certain Funds and Davor Rukavina
15 Advisors: Julian Vasek
16 MUNSCH, HARDT, KOPF & HARR
17 500 N. Akard Street, Suite 3800
18 Dallas, TX 75201-6659
19 (214) 855-7587

20 For the NexPoint Lauren K. Drawhorn
21 Parties: WICK PHILLIPS
22 3131 McKinney Avenue, Suite 100
23 Dallas, TX 75204
24 (214) 692-6200

25 For the U.S. Trustee: Lisa L. Lambert
OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES
TRUSTEE
1100 Commerce Street, Room 976
Dallas, TX 75242
(214) 767-8967

For Scott Ellington, Debra A. Dandeneau
Isaac Leventon, Thomas BAKER & MCKENZIE, LLP
Surgent, and Frank 452 Fifth Avenue
Waterhouse: New York, NY 10018
(212) 626-4875

For Certain Funds and A. Lee Hogewood, III
Advisors: K&L GATES, LLP
4350 Lassiter at North Hills
Avenue, Suite 300
Raleigh, NC 27609
(919) 743-7306

1 Recorded by: Michael F. Edmond, Sr.
2 UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
3 1100 Commerce Street, 12th Floor
4 Dallas, TX 75242
5 (214) 753-2062

6 Transcribed by: Kathy Rehling
7 311 Paradise Cove
8 Shady Shores, TX 76208
9 (972) 786-3063
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1 DALLAS, TEXAS - FEBRUARY 3, 2021 - 9:38 A.M.

2 THE CLERK: All rise. The United States Bankruptcy
3 Court for the Northern District of Texas, Dallas Division, is
4 now in session, the Honorable Stacey Jernigan presiding.

5 THE COURT: Good morning. Please be seated. All
6 right. We are ready for Day Two of the confirmation hearing
7 in Highland Capital Management, LP, Case No. 19-34054. I'll
8 just make sure we've got the key parties at the moment. Do we
9 have Mr. Pomerantz, Mr. Morris, for the Debtor team?

10 MR. POMERANTZ: Yes. Good morning, Your Honor. Jeff
11 Pomerantz for the Debtors.

12 MR. MORRIS: And I'm here as well, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: All right. Good.

14 All right. For our objecting parties, do we have Mr.
15 Taylor and your crew for Mr. Dondero?

16 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Your Honor.

17 THE COURT: Good morning.

18 All right. For Dugaboy Trust and Get Good Trust, do we
19 have Mr. Draper? (No response.) All right. I do see Mr.
20 Draper. I didn't hear an appearance. You must be on mute.

21 MR. DRAPER: I'm present, --

22 THE COURT: Okay.

23 MR. DRAPER: -- Your Honor.

24 THE COURT: Okay. Good morning.

25 MR. DRAPER: I'm present, Your Honor.

1 THE COURT: Good morning. I heard you that time.
2 Thank you.

3 All right. And now for what I'll call the Funds and
4 Advisors Objectors, do we have Ms. Rukavina present?

5 MR. RUKAVINA: Yes, Your Honor. Good morning.

6 THE COURT: Good morning. All right. And I will
7 check. Do we have Mr. Clemente or your team there?

8 MR. CLEMENTE: Yes. Good morning, Your Honor. Matt
9 Clemente from Sidley Austin on behalf of the Committee.

10 THE COURT: All right. Ms. Drawhorn, do we have you
11 there for the NexPoint Real Estate Partners and related funds?

12 MS. DRAWHORN: Yes, Your Honor. Good morning.

13 THE COURT: Good morning. All right. Did I miss --
14 I think that captured all of our Objectors. Anyone who I've
15 missed?

16 All right. Well, when we recessed yesterday, Mr. Morris,
17 I think you were about to call your third witness; is that
18 correct?

19 MR. MORRIS: It is, Your Honor. But if I may, I'd
20 like to just address the objections to the remaining exhibits,
21 since I hope that won't take too long.

22 THE COURT: All right. You may.

23 MR. POMERANTZ: Actually, Your Honor, before we go
24 there, we filed the supplemental declaration of Patrick
25 Leatham, as we indicated we would do yesterday. We just

1 wanted to get confirmation again that nobody intends to cross-
2 examine him, so that he doesn't have to sit through the
3 festivities today.

4 THE COURT: All right. Well, I did see that you
5 filed that.

6 Does anyone anticipate wanting to cross-examine Mr.
7 Leatham, the balloting agent?

8 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, I take it that that
9 declaration is part of the record. As long as the Court
10 confirms that, I do not intend to call the gentlemen.

11 THE COURT: All right. Well, I will take judicial
12 notice of it and make it part of the record. It appears at
13 Docket Entry No. 1887. Again, it was filed -- well, it was
14 actually filed early this morning, I think. So, all right.
15 So, with --

16 MR. MORRIS: And to avoid --

17 THE COURT: Go ahead.

18 MR. MORRIS: To -- I was just going to say, to avoid
19 any ambiguity, Your Honor, the Debtor respectfully moves that
20 document into the evidentiary record.

21 THE COURT: All right. The Court will --

22 (Interruption.)

23 THE COURT: Someone needs to put their phone on mute,
24 perhaps. Unless someone was intentionally speaking.

25 All right. So, I will grant that request. Docket Entry

1 No. 1887 will be part of the confirmation evidence of this
2 hearing.

3 (Debtor's Patrick Leatham Declaration at **Docket 1887** is
4 received into evidence.)

5 THE COURT: All right. Anything else? There were
6 other exhibits I think you were going to talk about?

7 MR. MORRIS: Yeah. Let me just go through them one
8 at a time, if I may, Your Honor.

9 THE COURT: Okay.

10 MR. MORRIS: All right. So, I'm going to deal with
11 the transcripts that have been objected to one at a time. And
12 I'll just take them in order. The first one can be found at
13 Exhibit B. It is on **Docket No. 1822**.

14 THE COURT: Okay.

15 MR. MORRIS: Exhibit B is the deposition transcript
16 from the December 16, 2020 hearing on the Advisor and the
17 Funds' motion for an order restricting the Debtor from
18 engaging in certain CLO-related transactions.

19 During that hearing, the Court heard the testimony of
20 Dustin Norris. Mr. Norris is an executive vice president for
21 each of the Funds and each of the Advisors.

22 We would be offering the transcript for the limited
23 purposes of establishing Mr. Dondero's ownership and control
24 over the Advisors.

25 Mr. Norris also gave some pretty substantial testimony

1 concerning the so-called independent board of the Funds.

2 And as a general matter, Your Honor, to the extent that
3 the objection is on hearsay grounds, the transcript -- at
4 least the portions relating to Mr. Norris's testimony --
5 simply are not hearsay under Evidentiary Rule 801(d)(2).
6 These are statements of an opposing party, and I think we fall
7 well within that.

8 So, we would respectfully request that the Court admit
9 into the record the transcript from December 16th, at least
10 the portions of which are Mr. Norris's testimony.

11 THE COURT: All right. And, again, these appear at
12 -- I think I heard you say B and then E. Is that correct?

13 MR. MORRIS: Just B. Just B at the moment. B as in
14 boy.

15 THE COURT: Okay. Just B at the moment?

16 All right. Any objections to that?

17 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, I had objected, but now
18 that it's offered for that limited purpose, I withdraw my
19 objection.

20 THE COURT: All right. Then B -- I'm sorry. Was
21 there anyone else speaking?

22 B will be admitted. And, again, it appears at Docket
23 Entry 1822.

24 (Debtor's Exhibit B, Docket Entry 1822, is received into
25 evidence.)

1 MR. MORRIS: Okay. Next, the next transcript can be
2 found at Exhibit 6R, and that's Docket 1866. Exhibit 6R is
3 the transcript of the January 9, 2020 hearing where the Court
4 approved the corporate governance settlement. We think that
5 that transcript is highly relevant, Your Honor, because it
6 reflects not only Mr. Dondero's notice and active
7 participation in the consummation of the corporate governance
8 agreement, but it also reflects the Court and the parties'
9 views and expectations that were established at that time,
10 such that if anybody contends that there's any ambiguity about
11 any aspect of the order, I believe that that would be the best
12 evidence to resolve any such disputes.

13 So, for the purpose of establishing Mr. Dondero's notice,
14 Mr. Dondero's participation, and the parties' discussions and
15 expectations with regard to every aspect of the corporate
16 governance settlement, including Mr. Dondero's stipulation,
17 the order that emerged from it, and the term sheet, we think
18 that that's properly into evidence.

19 THE COURT: Any objection?

20 All right. 6R will be admitted. Again, at Docket Entry
21 1822.

22 (Debtor's Exhibit 6R, Docket Entry 1822, is received into
23 evidence.)

24 MR. MORRIS: Next, Your Honor, we've got Exhibits 6S
25 as in Sam and 6T as in Thomas. They're companions. And they

1 can be found at **Docket 1866**. And those are the transcripts.
2 The first one is from the October 27th disclosure statement
3 hearing, and the second one actually is from the Patrick
4 Daugherty, I believe, lift stay motion.

5 I'll deal with the first one first, Your Honor. We
6 believe that the transcript of the October 27th hearing goes
7 to the good faith nature of the Debtor's proposed plan. It
8 shows that the Debtor and the Committee were not always
9 aligned on every interest. It shows that the Committee, in
10 fact, strenuously objected to certain aspects of the then-
11 proposed plan by the Debtors. And we just think it goes to
12 the heart of the good faith argument.

13 The transcript for the 28th, we would propose to offer for
14 the limited purpose of the commentary that you offered at the
15 end of that hearing, where Your Honor made it clear that
16 employee releases would not be -- would not likely be
17 acceptable to the Court unless there was some consideration
18 paid.

19 And it was really, frankly, Your Honor's comments that
20 helped spur the Committee and the Debtor to discuss over the
21 next few weeks the resolution of the issues concerning the
22 employee releases.

23 So we're not offering Exhibit 6T for anything having to do
24 with Mr. Daugherty or his claim, but just the latter portion
25 relating to the discussion about the employee releases. And,

1 with that, we'd move those transcripts into evidence.

2 THE COURT: Any objection?

3 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, yes, I do object. 6S is
4 hearsay, and under Rule 804(b)(1) it's admissible only if the
5 witnesses are unavailable to be called. There's been no
6 suggestion that they're not.

7 As far as 6T, what Your Honor says is not hearsay, so as
8 long as it's just what Your Honor was saying, I do not object
9 to 6T. I object to the balance of it.

10 THE COURT: Okay. What about that objection on 6S?

11 MR. MORRIS: Yeah. One second, Your Honor. I would
12 go to the residual exception to the hearsay rule under 807.
13 807 specifically applies if the statement being offered is
14 supported by sufficient guarantees of trustworthiness and it's
15 more probative on the point -- and the point here is simply to
16 help buttress the Debtor's good faith argument -- and it's
17 more probative on the point than any other evidence. And I'm
18 not sure what better evidence there would be than an on-the-
19 record discussion between the Debtor and the Committee as to
20 the disputes they were having on the disclosure statement.

21 THE COURT: All right. I'm going to overrule the
22 objection and accept that 807 exception as being valid here.
23 So, I am admitting both 6S and 6T. And for the record, I
24 think you said they appeared at 1866. They actually appear at
25 1822.

1 MR. MORRIS: Okay, Your Honor. I am corrected. It
2 is 6S and 6T, and they are indeed at 1822. Forgive me.

3 THE COURT: Okay.

4 (Debtor's Exhibits 6S and 6T, Docket Entry 1822, is
5 received into evidence.)

6 MR. MORRIS: The next transcript and the last one is
7 6U, which is also at 1822. 6U is the transcript from the
8 December 10th hearing on the Debtor's motion for a TRO against
9 Mr. Dondero. We believe the entirety of that transcript is
10 highly relevant, and it relates specifically to the Debtor's
11 request for the exculpation, gatekeeper, and injunction
12 provisions of their plan. And on that basis, we would offer
13 that into evidence.

14 THE COURT: Any objection?

15 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Your Honor. This is Clay Taylor on
16 behalf of Mr. Dondero.

17 We do object, on the same basis that it is hearsay. There
18 has certainly been plenty of testimony before this Court and
19 on the record as to why the Debtor believes that its plan
20 provisions are appropriate and allowable, and there's no need
21 to allow hearsay in for that. All of the witnesses were
22 available to be called by the Debtor. The Debtor is in the
23 midst of its case and can call whoever else it needs to call
24 to get these into evidence or to get those docs into evidence.
25 And therefore, we don't believe that any residual exception

1 should apply.

2 THE COURT: Mr. Morris, your response?

3 MR. MORRIS: First, Your Honor, any statements made
4 by or on behalf of Mr. Dondero would not be hearsay under
5 801(d) (2) .

6 And secondly, there is no other evidence of the Debtor's
7 motion of the -- of the argument that was had. There is no
8 other evidence, let alone better evidence, than the transcript
9 itself. And I believe 807 is certainly the best rule to
10 capture that.

11 It is a statement that's supported by sufficient
12 guarantees of trustworthiness. Again, these are the litigants
13 appearing before Your Honor. It may not be sworn testimony,
14 but I would hope that everybody is doing their best to comply
15 with the guarantee of trustworthiness in that regard, putting
16 aside advocacy.

17 And it is more probative on the point for which we're
18 offering -- and that is on the very issues of exculpation,
19 gatekeeper, and injunction -- than anything else we can offer
20 in that regard.

21 THE COURT: All right. I overrule the objection and
22 I will admit 6U. Okay.

23 (Debtor's Exhibit 6U, Docket Entry 1822, is received into
24 evidence.)

25 MR. MORRIS: All right. Going back to the top, Your

1 Honor, Companions Exhibit D as in David and E as in Edward,
2 which are at **Docket 1822**.

3 Exhibit D is an email string that relates to the Debtor's
4 communications with the Creditors' Committee concerning a
5 transaction known as SSP, which stands for Steel Products --
6 Structural and Steel Products. So that was an asset that the
7 Debtor was selling, trying to sell at a particular point in
8 time. And Exhibit E is a deck that the Debtor had prepared
9 for the benefit of the UCC.

10 And if we looked that those documents, Your Honor, you'd
11 see that the Debtor was properly following the protocols that
12 were put in place in connection with the January 9th corporate
13 governance settlement. And the Committee is being informed by
14 the Debtor of what the Debtor intends to do with that
15 particular asset.

16 And the reason that it's particularly relevant here, Your
17 Honor, is Dustin Norris had submitted a declaration in support
18 of their motion that was heard on September -- on December
19 16th. That declaration is an exhibit to what is Exhibit A on
20 **Docket 1822**. Exhibit A on the docket is the Advisor and the
21 Funds' motion. Okay? So, Exhibit A is the motion. Attached
22 to that Exhibit A is an exhibit, which is Mr. Norris's
23 declaration.

24 At Paragraph 9 of Mr. Norris's declaration, he takes issue
25 with the Debtor's process for the sale of that particular

1 asset.

2 And so, having admitted already into the record Mr.
3 Norris's declaration, we believe that these documents rebut
4 the statements made in Mr. Norris's declaration, and indeed,
5 were part of the transcript that has now already been admitted
6 into evidence. So we think the documents are needed because
7 they were exhibits during that hearing.

8 THE COURT: All right. Any objection?

9 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, yes, I object based on
10 authenticity. This document has not been authenticated, nor
11 has the attachment. And on hearsay. And I don't think that
12 the Debtor can introduce one exhibit just to introduce another
13 to rebut the first.

14 THE COURT: Your response?

15 MR. MORRIS: You know, in all honesty, I wish that
16 the authenticity objection had been made yesterday and I might
17 have been able to deal with that.

18 These documents have already been admitted by the Court
19 against these very same parties. I think it would be a little
20 unfair for them now to exclude the document that they had no
21 objection to the first time around. They clearly relate to
22 Paragraph 9 of Mr. Norris's declaration, which was admitted
23 into evidence in this case without objection.

24 THE COURT: All right. I overrule the objection. D
25 and E are admitted.

1 (Debtor's Exhibits D and E, Docket Entry 1822, is received
2 into evidence.)

3 MR. MORRIS: Next, Your Honor, we have Exhibits 4D as
4 in David, 4E as in Edward, and 4G as in Gregory. And those
5 can all be found on **Docket 1822**. And to just cut to the
6 chase, Your Honor, these are the K&L Gates letter that were
7 sent in late December and my firm's responses to those
8 letters.

9 Those letters are being offered, again, to support --
10 well, the Debtor contends that, in the context of this case,
11 and at the time and under the circumstances, the letters
12 constituted interference and evinces a disregard for the
13 January 9th order, for Mr. Dondero's TRO, and for the Court's
14 comments at the December 16th hearing. And they go
15 specifically to the Debtor's request for the gatekeeper,
16 exculpation, and injunction provisions.

17 To the extent that those exhibits contain the letters that
18 were sent on behalf of the Funds and on behalf of the
19 Advisors, they would simply not be hearsay under 801(d)(2).
20 And to the extent the objection goes to my firm's response, I
21 think just as a matter of completeness the Court -- I won't
22 offer them for the truth of the matter asserted. I'll simply
23 offer the Pachulski responses at those exhibits for the
24 purpose of stating the Debtor's position, without regard to
25 the truth of the matter asserted.

1 THE COURT: All right. Any objection?

2 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, with that understanding,
3 I'll withdraw my objection to these exhibits.

4 THE COURT: All right. So, 4D, 4E, and 4G are
5 admitted.

6 (Debtor's Exhibits 4D, 4E, and 4G, Docket Entry 1822, are
7 received into evidence.)

8 MR. MORRIS: Next, Your Honor, we've got Exhibit 5T
9 as in Thomas. That document can be found at **Docket No. 1822**.
10 Your Honor, that document is a schedule of a long list of
11 promissory notes that are owed to the Debtor by the Advisors,
12 Dugaboy, and Mr. Dondero. But I think that, upon reflection,
13 I'll withdraw that exhibit.

14 THE COURT: All right.

15 (Debtor's Exhibit 5T is withdrawn.)

16 MR. MORRIS: And then, finally, just one last one. I
17 think Mr. Rukavina objected to Exhibit 70 as in Oscar, which
18 can be found at **Docket No. 1877**. Exhibit 70 are the documents
19 that were admitted in the January 21st hearing, and I believe
20 that they all go -- they're being offered to support the
21 Debtor's application for the gatekeeper, exculpation, and
22 injunction provisions.

23 THE COURT: All right. 70 is being offered. Any
24 objection?

25 MR. RUKAVINA: Yes, Your Honor. I do object. Those

1 are exhibits from a separate adversary proceeding that has not
2 been concluded. In fact, my witness is still on the stand in
3 that.

4 And I'll note that that's another 20,000 pages that's very
5 duplicative of the current record, and we already are going to
6 have an unwieldy record. So I question why Mr. Norris -- why
7 Mr. Morris would even need this.

8 So that's my objection, Your Honor.

9 MR. MORRIS: You know what? That's a fair point,
10 Your Honor. And -- that is a fair point, and I guess what I'd
11 like to do is at some point this morning see if I can single
12 out documents that are not duplicative and come back to you
13 with very specific documents. I think that's a very fair
14 point.

15 THE COURT: All right.

16 MR. MORRIS: And with that, Your Honor, I think we've
17 now addressed every single document that the Debtor has
18 offered into evidence, and I believe, other than the
19 withdrawal of --

20 THE COURT: 5T.

21 MR. MORRIS: -- 5T --

22 THE COURT: Uh-huh.

23 MR. MORRIS: -- and the open question on 70, I
24 believe every single document at Docket 1822, 1866, and 1877
25 has been admitted. Do I have that right?

1 THE COURT: All right. Yes, because I did admit
2 yesterday 7F through 7Q, minus 7O, at 1877. So, yes, I agree
3 with what you just said.

4 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, I apologize. And Mr.
5 Morris. I have that 5S -- or six -- that 5S and 6C, Legal
6 Entities List, have not been admitted. But if I'm wrong on
7 that, then I apologize.

8 THE COURT: Okay. 5S was part of 1866, which I
9 admitted entirely.

10 And what was the other thing?

11 MR. RUKAVINA: I'm counting letters, Your Honor.
12 One, two, three, four, 6D, Legal Entities List, Redacted.

13 THE COURT: Okay. 6B would have been --

14 MR. RUKAVINA: D, Your Honor, as in dog. I'm sorry.
15 6-dog.

16 THE COURT: Okay. 6D, yeah, that was part of 1822
17 that I admitted *en masse* yesterday.

18 MR. MORRIS: Yeah, I didn't hear an objection to that
19 one yesterday, and I agree, Your Honor. My records show that
20 it was already admitted.

21 MR. RUKAVINA: Then I apologize to the Court.

22 THE COURT: All right. Any --

23 MR. MORRIS: No worries. Let's get --

24 THE COURT: Any other housekeeping matters before we
25 go to the next witness?

1 MR. MORRIS: No, Your Honor. Not from the Debtor.

2 THE COURT: Anyone else?

3 All right. Well, let's hear from the next witness.

4 MR. MORRIS: All right, Your Honor. The Debtor calls
5 as its next and last witness Marc Tauber.

6 THE COURT: All right. Mr. --

7 MR. MORRIS: Mr. Tauber, if you're on the phone,
8 please identify yourself.

9 (No response.)

10 THE COURT: Mr. Tauber, we're not hearing you.
11 Perhaps you are on mute. Could you unmute your device?

12 (No response.)

13 THE COURT: All right. If it's a phone, you need to
14 hit *6.

15 Hmm. Any -- do you know which caller he is?

16 THE CLERK: I'm trying to find out.

17 THE COURT: All right. We've got well over a hundred
18 people, so we can't easily identify where he is at the moment.

19 All right. Mr. Tauber, Marc Tauber? This is Judge
20 Jernigan. We cannot hear you, so -- all right. Well, maybe
21 we can --

22 MR. MORRIS: Can we just take a three-minute break
23 and let me see if I can track him down?

24 THE COURT: Yes. Why don't you do that? So let's
25 take a three-minute break.

1 MR. MORRIS: Thank you, Your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Okay.

3 (A recess ensued from 10:02 a.m. until 10:04 a.m.)

4 MR. MORRIS: Your Honor, if we may, he'll be dialing
5 in in a moment. But I've been reminded that there is one more
6 exhibit. It's the exhibit I used on rebuttal yesterday with
7 Mr. Seery. There was the one document that was on the docket,
8 and that was the Debtor's omnibus reply to the plan
9 objections, where we looked at Paragraph 135, I believe. And
10 we would offer that into evidence for the purpose of just
11 establishing that the Debtor had given notice no later than
12 January 22nd of its agreement in principle to assume the CLO
13 management contracts.

14 And then the second exhibit that we had offered that I
15 think I suggested could be marked as Exhibit 10A was the email
16 string between my firm and counsel for the CLO Issuers where
17 they agreed to the agreement in principle for the Debtor's
18 assumption of the CLO management contracts.

19 And we would offer both of those documents into evidence
20 as well.

21 THE COURT: All right. Any objections?

22 All right. Well, I will admit them.

23 As far as this email string with the CLO Issuers that you
24 called 10A, does that appear on the docket? I remember you
25 putting it on the screen, but, if not, you'll need to file a

1 supplement to the record, a supplemental exhibit.

2 MR. MORRIS: We will, Your Honor. We'll do that for
3 both of those exhibits.

4 THE COURT: And then as -- okay, for both? Because I
5 -- I've read that reply, and I could reference the docket
6 number if we need to.

7 MR. MORRIS: We'll clean that up, Your Honor.

8 THE COURT: Okay.

9 (Debtor's Exhibit 10A is received into evidence.)

10 (Clerk advises Court re new caller.)

11 THE COURT: Oh, okay. Just a minute. I was looking
12 up something.

13 (Pause.)

14 THE COURT: All right. Well, you're going to file --
15 hmm, I really wanted to just reference where that reply brief
16 appears on the record. There were a heck of a lot of things
17 filed on January 22nd.

18 (Interruption.)

19 THE COURT: Okay. We'll --

20 MR. MORRIS: All right. We're just going to need one
21 more minute with Mr. Tauber. It's my fault, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: Okay.

23 MR. MORRIS: I didn't send him easily-digestible
24 dial-in instructions. He'll be just a moment.

25 THE COURT: Okay.

1 (Court confers with Clerk regarding exhibit.)

2 THE COURT: Oh, it's at 1807? Okay. So, the reply
3 brief that we talked about Paragraph 35, that is at Docket No.
4 1807. Okay? All right.

5 (Debtor's Omnibus Reply to Plan Objections, Docket 1807,
6 is received into evidence.)

7 (Pause.)

8 MR. TAUBER: Hi. It's Marc Tauber.

9 THE COURT: All right.

10 MR. MORRIS: Excellent.

11 THE COURT: Mr. Tauber, this is Judge Jernigan. I
12 can hear you, but I can't see you. Do you have a video --

13 MR. TAUBER: Yeah, I don't know why it's not working.

14 THE COURT: Hmm.

15 MR. TAUBER: I'm on WebEx all day. Usually it works
16 no problem.

17 THE COURT: Okay. Well, do you want to give it
18 another try or two?

19 MR. TAUBER: Yeah. It looks like it's starting to
20 come up. It's all -- pictures, so --

21 THE COURT: Okay.

22 MR. TAUBER: -- hopefully you'll be able to see me in
23 a second.

24 THE COURT: Okay. The first thing I'm going to need
25 to do is swear you in, so we'll see if the video comes up here

1 in a minute.

2 MR. TAUBER: Okay.

3 THE COURT: Can you see us, Mr. Tauber?

4 MR. TAUBER: I can see four people. The rest are
5 just names still.

6 THE COURT: Okay.

7 MR. TAUBER: I can go out and try to come back in, if
8 you think that's --

9 THE COURT: I'm afraid of losing you. So, your
10 audio, is it on your phone or is it on --

11 MR. TAUBER: No.

12 THE COURT: -- a computer?

13 MR. TAUBER: On the computer. Yeah.

14 THE COURT: Okay. So you're coming through loud and
15 clear on your computer.

16 MR. TAUBER: Yeah. Like I said, we use WebEx for
17 work, so I have them on all day long without any issues,
18 typically.

19 THE COURT: Okay.

20 (Court confers with Clerk.)

21 THE COURT: Okay. Our court reporter thinks it's a
22 bandwidth issue on your end, so I don't --

23 MR. TAUBER: There's only two of us here at home on
24 the line right now, so I don't know why. It looks like it's
25 trying to come in, and then just keeps --

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25

1 THE COURT: I at least see your name on the screen
2 now, which I did not before.

3 MR. TAUBER: Yeah.

4 THE COURT: So hopefully we're going to -- ah. We
5 got you.

6 MR. TAUBER: There it is.

7 THE COURT: All right.

8 MR. TAUBER: Yeah.

9 MR. MORRIS: There we go.

10 MR. TAUBER: I might lose you, though. Give me one
11 second, because I have a thing saying the WebEx meeting has
12 stopped working. Let me close that.

13 THE COURT: Okay. We've still got you. Please raise
14 your right hand.

15 MR. TAUBER: Okay.

16 MARC TAUBER, DEBTOR'S WITNESS, SWORN

17 THE COURT: All right. Thank you. Mr. Morris?

18 MR. MORRIS: Thank you, Your Honor.

19 DIRECT EXAMINATION

20 BY MR. MORRIS:

21 Q Good morning, Mr. Tauber.

22 A Good morning.

23 Q I apologize for the delay in getting you the information.
24 Are you currently employed, sir?

25 A Yes, sir.

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1 Q By whom?

2 A Aon Financial Services.

3 Q And does Aon Financial Services provide insurance
4 brokerage services among its services?

5 A Yes.

6 Q And what position do you currently hold?

7 A Vice president.

8 Q How long have you been a vice president at Aon?

9 A Since October of 2019.

10 Q Can you just describe for the Court generally your
11 professional background?

12 A Sure. I spent about 20 years on Wall Street, working in a
13 variety of jobs, in research, trading, and as the COO of a
14 hedge fund. And then in 2010 I switched to the insurance
15 world. I was an underwriter for ten-plus years for Zurich and
16 QBE. And then in 2019 switched to the brokering side for Aon.

17 Q And what are your duties and responsibilities as a vice
18 president at Aon?

19 A Well, we're responsible for my team and I am responsible
20 for creating bespoke insurance programs, focusing on D&O and
21 E&O insurance for our insureds.

22 Q And what is, for the benefit of the record, what do you
23 mean by bespoke insurance program?

24 A Well, each client is different, so the programs and the
25 policies that we put in place might be off-the-shelf policies,

1 but we endorse and amend them as needed to meet the needs of
2 the individual client.

3 Q And during your work, both as an underwriter and now as a
4 broker, have you familiarized yourself with the market for D&O
5 and E&O insurance policies?

6 A Yes.

7 Q All right. Let's talk about the early part of this case.
8 Did there come a time in early 2020 when Aon was asked to
9 place insurance on behalf of the board of Strand Advisors?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Can you describe for the Court how that came about?

12 A Sure. One of our account executives, a man by the name of
13 Jim O'Neill, had a relationship with a man named John Dubel,
14 who was one of the appointees to serve on -- as a member of
15 Strand, which was being appointed, as we understood it, to be
16 the general partner of Highland Capital Management by the
17 Bankruptcy Court. And they -- we had done -- or, Jim and John
18 had a longstanding relationship. I had actually underwritten
19 an account for a previous appointment of John's when I was an
20 underwriter, so I had some familiarity with John as well, and
21 actually brokered a subsequent deal for John at Aon.

22 So I had, again, some familiarity with John, and we were,
23 you know, tasked with going out and finding a program for
24 Strand.

25 Q Can you describe what happened next? How did you go about

1 accomplishing that task?

2 A So, there are a number of markets or insurance companies
3 that provide management liability insurance, which this was a
4 management liability-type policy. D&O is a synonym for
5 management liability, I guess you'd say. And we approached
6 the, I think, 14 or 15 markets that we knew to provide
7 insurance in this space and that would be willing to buy the
8 type of policy we were seeking and have interest in a risk
9 like this, which had a little hair on it. Obviously, there
10 was the Dondero involvement, as well as the bankruptcy.

11 Q As part of that process, did you and your firm put
12 together a package of information for prospective interested
13 parties?

14 A Yes.

15 Q Can you describe for the Court what was contained in the
16 package?

17 A Had the *C.V.s*, some relevant pleadings from the case,
18 court order. I'd have to go back and look exactly. But sort
19 of just general, you know, general information that was
20 available about the situation at hand and Strand's
21 appointment.

22 Q And the court order that you just mentioned, is that the
23 one that had that gatekeeper provision in it?

24 A Correct.

25 Q And can you explain to the Court why you and your team

1 decided to include the order with the gatekeeper provision in
2 the package that you were delivering to prospective carriers?

3 A Sure. In our initial conversations to discuss our
4 engagement, the gatekeeper function was explained to us by
5 John. And I'm not sure who else was on the initial call.
6 And, but it was explained to us that I guess Judge Jernigan
7 would sit as the gatekeeper between any potential claimant
8 against the insureds and, you know, would basically have to
9 approve any claim that would be made against (indecipherable),
10 which would thereby prevent any frivolous claims from
11 happening.

12 Q All right. Let's just talk for a moment. How did you and
13 your firm decide which underwriters to present the package to?

14 A Again, you know, I -- my background, or my Wall Street
15 background, obviously, sort of made me have a -- it was very
16 unique for the insurance world when I switched over, so I had
17 sort of risen to a certain level of expertise within the
18 space. And, you know, our team also is very experienced, and
19 decades of experience in the insurance world. So we're very
20 familiar with the markets that are willing to provide these
21 types of policies and the markets that would be likely to take
22 a look at a risk such as this.

23 Q Okay. You mentioned that there was -- I think your words
24 were a little hair on this, and one of the things you
25 mentioned was bankruptcy. How did the fact that Strand was

1 the general partner of a debtor in bankruptcy impact your
2 ability to solicit D&O insurance?

3 A Well, it's just not a plain vanilla situation, so people
4 are somewhat, you know, are -- I think -- so, the type of
5 insurance, D&O insurance, that we write is very different from
6 auto insurance, as an example. Auto insurance, people expect
7 there to be a certain amount of claims, and they expect the
8 premiums to cover the claims plus the expenses and then
9 provide them a reasonable profit on top of that.

10 Our insurance is really much more by binary. The
11 expectation for underwriters is that they will be completing
12 ignoring -- or, avoiding risk at all costs, wherever possible.
13 So anytime there is a situation that looks a little risky, so
14 the premium might be a little higher, the deductible might be
15 a little higher, but, again, the underwriters are really
16 making a bet that they will not have a claim. Because the
17 premiums pale in comparison to the limits that are available
18 to the policyholder.

19 Q And so --

20 A So, -- I'm sorry. What were you going to say?

21 Q I didn't mean to interrupt.

22 A Yeah.

23 Q Have you finished your answer?

24 A Sure.

25 Q Okay. So, were some of the 14 or 15 markets that you

1 contacted reluctant to underwrite because there was a
2 bankruptcy ongoing?

3 A Well, I think that probably -- I mean, there are certain
4 markets that we didn't go to in the beginning because they
5 would be very reluctant to write a risk that had that kind of
6 hair on it, based on our experience from dealing with them.
7 And, you know, I think the bankruptcy was certainly a little
8 bit of an issue. And then, obviously, as people did their
9 research and -- or if they weren't already familiar with
10 Highland and got to know, you know, got -- I will just say for
11 a simple Google search and learned a little bit about Mr.
12 Dondero, I think there was definitely some significant
13 reluctance to write this program.

14 Q Was the fact that the Debtor -- was the fact that the
15 Debtor is a partnership an issue that came up, in your -- in
16 your process?

17 A There are certainly some carriers who won't write what's
18 known as general partnership liability insurance. So, yes,
19 that is part of that. It was part of the limiting factor in
20 terms of who we went to.

21 Q Okay. And, finally, you mentioned Mr. Dondero. What role
22 did he play in your ability to obtain insurance for the Strand
23 board?

24 A Well, that's a very significant role. As, you know, as
25 mentioned, the underwriters are very risk-averse, so the

1 litigiousness of Mr. Dondero is a very strong red flag
2 prohibiting a number of people from writing the insurance at
3 all. And the ones that were writing, that were willing to
4 provide options, were looking for protections from Mr.
5 Dondero.

6 Q And what kind of protections were they looking for?

7 A Well, the gatekeeper function was a key factor. That was
8 really the only way we could even start a conversation with
9 any of the people that we were able to engage. And in
10 addition, they wanted a, you know, sort of a belts and
11 suspenders additional protection of having an exclusion
12 preventing any litigation brought by or on behalf of Mr.
13 Dondero.

14 Q Were you able to identify any carrier who was prepared to
15 underwrite D&O insurance for Strand without the gatekeeper
16 provision or without a Dondero exclusion?

17 A We were not.

18 Q Okay. Let's fast-forward now. Has your firm been
19 requested to obtain professional management insurance for the
20 contemplated post-confirmation debtor entities and individuals
21 associated with those entities?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Okay. So let's just talk about the entities first, the
24 Claimant Trust and the Litigation Trust. In response to that
25 request, have you and your team gone out into the marketplace

1 to try to find an underwriter willing to underwrite a policy
2 for those entities?

3 A Yes.

4 Q And have you been able to find any carrier who's willing
5 to provide coverage for the Claimant Trust and the Litigation
6 Trust?

7 A Yes.

8 Q And how many -- how many have expressed a willingness to
9 do that?

10 A Two.

11 Q And have those two carriers indicated that there would be
12 conditions to coverage for the entities?

13 A Both will require a -- the continuation of the gatekeeper
14 function, as well as a Dondero exclusion.

15 Q Okay. Have you also been tasked with the responsibility
16 of trying to find coverage for the individuals associated with
17 the Claimant Trust and the Litigation Trust, meaning the
18 Claimant Trustee, the Litigation Trustee, and the Oversight
19 Board?

20 A Yes. So we did it concurrently.

21 Q Okay. So, are the two firms that you just mentioned
22 willing to provide insurance for the individuals as well as
23 the entities?

24 A Correct. With the same stipulations.

25 Q They require -- they both require the gatekeeper and the

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1 Dondero exclusion?

2 A That's correct.

3 Q Is there any other firm who has indicated a willingness to
4 consider providing D&O insurance for the individuals?

5 A There is one that is willing to do so, as long as the
6 gatekeeper function remains in place. They have indicated
7 that if the gatekeeper function was to be removed, that they
8 would then add a Dondero exclusion to their coverage.

9 Q So is there any insurance carrier that you're aware of who
10 is prepared to insure either the individuals or the entities
11 without a gatekeeper provision?

12 A No.

13 Q And that last company, I just want to make sure the record
14 is clear: If the gatekeeper provision is overturned on appeal
15 or is otherwise not effective, do you have an understanding as
16 to what happens to the insurance coverage?

17 A They will either add an exclusion for any claims brought
18 by or on behalf of Mr. Dondero or cancel the coverage
19 altogether.

20 MR. MORRIS: I have no further questions, Your Honor.

21 THE COURT: All right. Cross of this witness?

22 CROSS-EXAMINATION

23 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

24 Q Mr. Tauber, I'm a little confused. So, the insurance
25 that's being written now for the post-bankruptcy entities, did

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1 I hear you say that there is one carrier that would give that
2 insurance subject to having a Dondero exclusion?

3 A So, first of all, there's nothing currently being written.
4 We have solicited quotes. So, just to make sure that that --
5 I want to make sure that's clear.

6 We have three carriers that are willing to provide varying
7 levels of coverage. All three will only do so with the
8 existence of the gatekeeper function continuing to be in
9 place. One of the three has -- two of those three will also
10 provide the coverage with -- even with the gatekeeper function
11 and the Dondero exclusion. The third one was not requiring a
12 Dondero exclusion unless the gatekeeper function goes away.

13 Q Okay. So the third one, you believe, will, whatever the
14 term is, write the insurance or provide the coverage without a
15 gatekeeper, as long as there is a strong Dondero exclusion?

16 A No. Their initial requirement is that the gatekeeper
17 function remains in place. That is their preferred option.
18 If the gatekeeper function is removed, then they will add a
19 Dondero exclusion in place of the gatekeeper exclusion. In
20 addition, that carrier is only willing to provide coverage for
21 the individuals, not for the entities.

22 Q Okay. Thank you.

23 MR. RUKAVINA: I'll pass the witness, Your Honor.

24 THE COURT: All right. Other cross?

25 MR. TAYLOR: Clay Taylor on behalf of Mr. Dondero.

1 THE COURT: Okay.

2 CROSS-EXAMINATION

3 BY MR. TAYLOR:

4 Q Good morning, Mr. Tauber.

5 A Good morning.

6 Q Are you generally familiar with placing D&O insurance at
7 distressed debt level private equity firms?

8 A I am familiar with it probably more from the underwriting
9 side, and I also worked at a fund that was distressed and had
10 to be liquidated, so I -- as the COO, so I have a fair amount
11 of familiarity, yes.

12 Q Okay. Before taking this to market for the first time for
13 the pre-confirmation policies that you have in place, did your
14 firm conduct any due diligence or analysis of comparing the
15 amount of litigation the Highland entities and Mr. Dondero
16 were involved in as compared to other comparable firms in the
17 marketplace? Say, you know, Apollo, Fortress, Cerberus, other
18 similar market participants?

19 A Well, it wouldn't really be our role as the broker.
20 That's the role of the underwriter.

21 Q Are you familiar if any of the underwriters undertook any
22 such analysis?

23 A I would assume that they did, since they all had concerns
24 about Mr. Dondero almost immediately.

25 Q Do you have any -- you didn't conduct any personal due

1 diligence on comparing the amount of litigation that the
2 Highland entities were involved in as compared to, say,
3 Fortress, do you?

4 A Well, again, that wouldn't really be my role as the
5 broker. But I will say that I used to write the primary
6 insurance for Fortress Investment Group when I was at Zurich.
7 So I'm extremely familiar with Fortress, to use your example,
8 and I would say that the level of litigation at Fortress was
9 much, just out of personal knowledge, was significantly less
10 than I had encountered or than I had read about at Highland.

11 Q That you have read about? Is that based upon a number of
12 cases where Fortress was a plaintiff as compared to Highland
13 was a plaintiff? Over what time period?

14 A Again, not my role. Not something that I've done. I'm
15 just generally familiar with Fortress and I'm generally
16 familiar with Highland.

17 Q All right. So you're generally familiar and you say that
18 -- you're telling me and this Court that Fortress is involved
19 in less litigation. Could you quantify that for me, please?

20 A No, but it's really irrelevant to the situation at hand.
21 The issue is not my feelings whatsoever. The issue is the
22 underwriters' feelings and their concern with Mr. Dondero, not
23 mine or anybody else's.

24 Q So, I appreciate your answer and thank you for that, but I
25 believe the question that was before you is, have you

1 quantitatively -- do you have any quantitative analysis by
2 which you can back up the statement that Fortress is less
3 litigious than Highland?

4 A I wouldn't even try, no.

5 Q Okay. Do you have any quantitative analysis for -- that
6 Cerberus is any less litigious than Highland?

7 A I don't have any real knowledge of Cerberus's
8 litigiousness.

9 Q Same question as to Apollo.

10 A Again, the Fortress, you just happened to mention
11 Fortress, which was a special case because I used to be their
12 primary underwriter. I don't have any specific -- I'm not a
13 claims attorney. I don't have any specific knowledge of the
14 level of litigiousness.

15 And, again, it's not up to me, my decision. It's the
16 underwriters' decision of whether or not they're willing to
17 write the coverage, not mine.

18 Q You mentioned that the -- when you took this out to
19 market, it had a little hair on it. Correct?

20 A Correct.

21 Q And you put together a package of materials that you sent
22 out to 14 or 15 market participants; is -- did I get that
23 correct?

24 A Yes.

25 Q And in that package, you had certain pleadings, including

1 the court order, correct?

2 A Yes. I believe that's correct.

3 Q And that was after your initial conversation with John and
4 -- where he pointed out the gatekeeper role. Correct?

5 A Correct.

6 Q And so when you went out to market, presumably you
7 highlighted the gatekeeper role to all the people you
8 solicited offers from because you thought it included less
9 risk, correct?

10 A It offered a level of protection that was not -- that's
11 not common. So it's, yes, it's a huge selling point for the
12 risk.

13 Q Okay. So, to be clear, you never went out to the market
14 to even see if you could get underwriting the first time
15 without the gatekeeper function; is that correct?

16 A Well, it's my job as a broker to present the risk in the
17 best possible light. So if we have a fact that makes the risk
18 a better write for the underwriters, we, of course, will
19 highlight it. So, no, I did not do that.

20 Q Okay. So, the quick answer to the question is no, you did
21 not go out and solicit any bids without the gatekeeper
22 function?

23 A Correct.

24 Q When you have approached the market for the post-
25 confirmation potential coverage, did you approach the same 14

1 or 15 parties that you did before?

2 A I don't have the two lists in front of me. They would
3 have been vastly similar, yes.

4 Q Okay. And so, again, all of the 14 or 15 parties or the
5 lists that you solicited were already familiar with the
6 gatekeeper function, correct?

7 A Yes.

8 Q And so therefore they already had that right; they're not
9 going to trade against themselves and therefore say that,
10 without it, we'll go ahead and write coverage. Correct?

11 A I -- I -- it'd be hard to answer that question. I don't
12 know.

13 Q Okay. Because you didn't try that, did you?

14 A I would have had no reason to, no.

15 Q Okay. So you don't know if a market exists without the
16 gatekeeper function because you haven't asked, have you?

17 A I guess that's fair, yeah.

18 MR. TAYLOR: I have no further questions.

19 THE COURT: All right. Any other Objectors with
20 cross-examination?

21 MR. DRAPER: I have no questions for the witness,
22 Your Honor.

23 THE COURT: All right. Anyone else? Mr. Morris,
24 redirect?

25 MR. MORRIS: Just one.

Tauber - Redirect

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1 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

2 BY MR. MORRIS:

3 Q One question, Mr. Tauber. Is there any -- do all
4 underwriters -- any underwriters for Fortress require, as a
5 condition to underwriting the D&O insurance, require a
6 gatekeeping provision?

7 A In my, you know, 11, 12 years of experience in this
8 industry, in this space, I have never seen that gatekeeper
9 function be available, as an underwriter or as a broker. So,
10 no.

11 MR. MORRIS: No further questions, Your Honor.

12 THE COURT: Any recross on that redirect?

13 All right. Well, Mr. Tauber, you are excused. We thank
14 you for your testimony today. So you can log off.

15 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

16 THE COURT: Okay.

17 (The witness is excused.)

18 THE COURT: Mr. Morris, does the Debtor rest?

19 MR. MORRIS: The Debtor does rest, Your Honor.

20 THE COURT: All right. Well, what are we going to
21 have from the Objectors as far as evidence?

22 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, I will be very short. I
23 will call Mr. Seery for less than ten minutes. I will call
24 Mr. Post for less than ten minutes. I will have one exhibit.
25 And I think that that's it for all the Objectors, unless I'm

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1 mistaken, gentlemen.

2 MR. TAYLOR: Your Honor, I had one witness, Mr.
3 Sevilla, under subpoena to testify, and needed a brief moment
4 to discuss with my colleagues whether we're going to call him,
5 and if so, put him on notice that he would be coming up
6 probably about -- I don't know your schedule, Your Honor, but
7 probably, I'm guessing, either before lunch or after, and I
8 need to let him know that also.

9 So I do need a brief three to five minutes to confer with
10 my colleagues and some direction from the Court to, if we
11 decide to call him, as to when we would tell him to be
12 available.

13 THE COURT: All right. Well, before I get to that,
14 Mr. Draper, do you have any witnesses?

15 MR. DRAPER: I do not.

16 THE COURT: All right. Well, let's see. It's 10:34.
17 We're making good time this morning. If Seery is truly ten
18 minutes of direct, and Post is truly ten minutes of direct,
19 and I don't know how long the documentary exhibits are going
20 to take, it sounds to me like we are very likely to get to Mr.
21 Sevilla before a lunch break.

22 So if you want to -- you know, I don't know what that
23 involves, you sending text messages or making a quick phone
24 call. Do you need a five-minute break for that?

25 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Your Honor. It involves a phone

1 call and an email. Just a confirmatory phone call just to
2 make sure that the guy -- just so you know who he is, he is
3 actually a Highland employee, but he's represented by separate
4 counsel, and so we do need to go through him just because
5 that's the right thing to do.

6 THE COURT: All right. Well, again, I mean, I never
7 know how long cross is going to take, but I'm guessing, you
8 know, we're going to get to him in an hour or so, if not
9 sooner, it sounds like. So, all right. So, do we need a
10 five-minute break?

11 MR. RUKAVINA: And Your Honor, it might make more
12 sense to make it a ten-minute break. I suspect that Mr.
13 Taylor will be able to release his witness if he and I will
14 just be able to talk. So I would ask the Court's indulgence
15 for a ten-minuter.

16 THE COURT: Okay. We'll take a ten-minute break.
17 We'll come back at 10:46 Central time.

18 THE CLERK: All rise.

19 (A recess ensued from 10:36 a.m. until 10:46 a.m.)

20 THE CLERK: All rise.

21 THE COURT: Please be seated. We're going back on
22 the record in the Highland confirmation hearing. Are the
23 Objectors ready to proceed?

24 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, Davor Rukavina. We are.

25 THE COURT: All right. Well, Mr. Rukavina, are you

1 going to call your witnesses first?

2 MR. RUKAVINA: Yes, I will. Before that, if it might
3 help the Court and Mr. Morris: Mr. Morris, with respect to
4 that last exhibit, I do not object to the admission of any of
5 the exhibits that were admitted at that PI hearing.

6 But I do think, Your Honor, for the record, that -- and I
7 would ask Mr. Morris that he should refile those exhibits here
8 in this case, except for those that are duplicative. Because,
9 again, there's 10,000 pages of indentures, et cetera.

10 MR. MORRIS: Thank you very much, sir.

11 Your Honor, if that's acceptable to you, we'll do that as
12 soon as possible.

13 THE COURT: All right. And let me make sure the
14 record is clear. Are we talking about what you've described
15 as 70? I'm getting mixed up now. Am I --

16 MR. MORRIS: Yes, Your Honor.

17 THE COURT: Okay.

18 MR. MORRIS: It's 70, which is the documents that
19 were introduced into evidence in the prior hearing. And Mr.
20 Rukavina is exactly right, that there is substantial overlap
21 between that and other documents that have already been
22 admitted in the record in this case. So we'll just file an
23 abridged version of Exhibit O that only includes non-
24 duplicative documents.

25 THE COURT: All right. So that will be admitted, and

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1 we'll look for your filed abridged version to show up on the
2 docket. 70.

3 (Debtor's Exhibit 70 is received into evidence as
4 specified.)

5 THE COURT: All right. What's next?

6 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, Jim Seery, please. Mr.
7 James Seery.

8 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Seery, welcome back.
9 Please raise your right hand.

10 MR. SEERY: Can you -- can you hear me, Your Honor?

11 THE COURT: I can now.

12 JAMES P. SEERY, CERTAIN FUNDS AND ADVISORS' WITNESS, SWORN

13 THE COURT: All right. Thank you.

14 Mr. Rukavina, go ahead.

15 DIRECT EXAMINATION

16 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

17 Q Mr. Seery, --

18 MR. RUKAVINA: Thank you.

19 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

20 Q Mr. Seery, good morning.

21 MR. RUKAVINA: Mr. Vasek, if you'll please pull up
22 the schedules.

23 What we have here, Your Honor, is **Docket 247**, the Debtor's
24 schedules. I'd ask the Court to take judicial notice of it.

25 THE COURT: All right. The Court will do so.

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1 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

2 Q Mr. Seery, are you familiar with these entities listed
3 here on the Debtor's schedules?

4 A Generally. Each one a little bit different.

5 Q Okay. Do you agree that the Debtor still owns equity
6 interests in these entities?

7 A I believe it does, yes.

8 Q Okay. Is it true that none of these entities are publicly
9 traded?

10 A I don't believe any of these are publicly-traded entities,
11 no.

12 Q Okay. And none of these, to your knowledge, are debtors
13 in this bankruptcy case, right?

14 A No. We only have one debtor in the case.

15 Q Okay. So, Highland Select Equity Fund, LP, the Debtor
16 owns more than 20 percent of the equity in that entity, right?

17 A I believe the Debtor owns the majority of that entity.
18 That is a fund with an on- and offshore feeder. And I, off
19 the top of my head, don't recall exactly how the allocations
20 of equity work. But I believe we do.

21 Q Does 67 percent refresh your memory? Are you prepared to
22 say that the Debtor owns 67 percent of that equity?

23 A I'm not prepared to say that, no.

24 Q Okay. Wright, Ltd. Does the Debtor own more than 20
25 percent of that equity?

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1 A There's about -- I don't recall. There's about at least
2 25 artist, designers, or designs. Wright, AMES, Hockney,
3 Rothco, all own in different places, and they all own in turn
4 some other thing. So I don't know what each of them, off the
5 top of my head, own. There's -- they're part of a myriad of
6 corporate structures here.

7 Q Strak, Ltd. Do you know whether the Debtor owns more than
8 20 percent of the equity of that entity?

9 A Stark? I don't know.

10 Q Okay. I don't know how to pronounce the next one. Eamis
11 (phonetic) Ltd. Do you know whether the Debtor owns more than
12 20 percent of that equity?

13 A Off the top of my head, I don't recall.

14 Q What about Maple Avenue Holdings, LLC?

15 A I believe, I don't know if it's directly or indirectly,
16 that we own a hundred percent of that entity. But I'm not
17 sure.

18 Q What about Highland Capital Management Korea, Ltd.?

19 A Effectively, Highland Capital Management is owned a
20 hundred percent.

21 Q What about Highland Capital Management Singapore Pte.
22 Ltd.?

23 A We are in the process of shutting it down, so I don't know
24 that -- what the equity percentages are. It's really just a
25 question -- it's -- it's dissolved save for a signature from a

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1 Singaporean.

2 Q Okay. But did the Debtor own more than 20 percent of that
3 entity?

4 A I don't know the specific allocations of equity ownership.

5 Q Okay. What about Pennant (phonetic) Management, LP? Do
6 you know whether the Debtor owns or owned more than 20 percent
7 of that entity?

8 A I don't recall, no.

9 MR. RUKAVINA: You can take that exhibit down, Mr.
10 Vasek.

11 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

12 Q Mr. Seery, very quick, are you familiar with Bankruptcy
13 Rule 2015.3?

14 A I am, yes.

15 Q Okay. Has the Debtor filed any Rule 2015.3 statements in
16 this case?

17 A I don't believe we have.

18 Q Okay.

19 MR. RUKAVINA: Thank you, Your Honor. I'll pass the
20 witness.

21 THE COURT: All right. Any other Objector
22 questioning? None from Mr. Taylor, none from Mr. Draper, none
23 from Ms. Drawhorn?

24 All right. Any cross -- any examination from you, Mr.
25 Morris?

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1 MR. MORRIS: Just one question.

2 THE COURT: Go ahead.

3 CROSS-EXAMINATION

4 BY MR. MORRIS:

5 Q Mr. Seery, do you know why the Debtor has not yet filed
6 the 2015.3 statement?

7 A I have a recollection of it, yes.

8 Q Can you just describe that for the Court?

9 A When we -- when we initially filed, when the Debtor filed
10 and it was transferred over, we started trying to get all the
11 various rules completed. There are, as the Court is aware, at
12 least a thousand and maybe more, more like three thousand,
13 entities in the total corporate structure.

14 We pushed our internal counsel to try to get that done,
15 and were never able to really get it completed. We did not
16 have -- we were told we didn't have separate consolidating
17 statements for every entity, and it would be difficult. And
18 just in the rush of things that happened from the first
19 quarter into the COVID into the year, we just didn't complete
20 that filing. There was no reason for it other than we didn't
21 get it done initially and I think it fell through the cracks.

22 MR. MORRIS: Nothing further, Your Honor.

23 THE COURT: All right. Anything further, Mr.
24 Rukavina?

25 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

007885

1 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

2 Q Mr. Seery, I appreciate that answer. But you never sought
3 leave from the Bankruptcy Court to postpone the deadlines for
4 filing 2015.3, did you?

5 A No. If it hadn't fallen through the cracks, it would have
6 been something we recalled and we would have done something
7 with it. But, frankly, it just fell off the -- through the
8 cracks. We didn't deal with it.

9 Q Okay.

10 MR. RUKAVINA: Thank you, Your Honor. Thank you, Mr.
11 Seery.

12 THE COURT: All right. Any other Objector
13 examination?

14 Mr. Morris, anything further on that point?

15 MR. MORRIS: No, thank you, Your Honor. No further
16 questions.

17 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Seery, thank you. You're
18 excused once again from the witness stand.

19 (The witness is excused.)

20 THE COURT: Your next witness?

21 MR. SEERY: Thank you, Your Honor.

22 THE COURT: Uh-huh.

23 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, I'll call Jason Post. Mr.
24 Post, if you're listening, which I believe you are, if you'll
25 please activate your camera.

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1 THE COURT: Mr. Post, we do not see or hear you yet.

2 MR. RUKAVINA: Talk, Mr. Post, and I think it'll

3 focus on you.

4 MR. POST: Yes. Can you hear me now?

5 THE COURT: We can hear you. We cannot see you yet.

6 Could you say, "Testing, one, two; testing, one, two"?

7 MR. POST: Testing, one, two. Testing, one, two.

8 THE COURT: There you are. Okay. Please raise your
9 right hand.

10 JASON POST, CERTAIN FUNDS AND ADVISORS' WITNESS, SWORN

11 THE COURT: All right. Thank you. You may proceed.

12 DIRECT EXAMINATION

13 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

14 Q Mr. Post, good morning. State your name for the record,
15 please.

16 A Robert Jason Post.

17 Q How are you employed?

18 A I'm employed by NexPoint Advisors, LP.

19 Q What is your title?

20 A Chief compliance officer.

21 Q Were you ever employed by the Debtor here?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Between when and when? Approximately?

24 A I believe it was July of '08 through October of 2020.

25 Q What was your last title while you were employed at the

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1 Debtor?

2 A Still chief compliance officer. For the retail funds.

3 Q Okay. Very, very quickly, what does a chief compliance
4 officer do? Or what do you do?

5 A It's multiple things. Interaction with the regulators.

6 Adherence to prospectus and SAI limitations for the funds.

7 And then establishment of written policies and procedures to
8 prevent and detect violations of the federal securities laws
9 and then testing those on a frequent basis.

10 Q And I believe you mentioned you're the CCO for NexPoint
11 Advisors and Highland Capital Management Fund Advisors. Are
12 you also the CCO for any funds that they advise?

13 A Yes. For all the funds that they advise.

14 Q Okay. Does that include so-called retail funds?

15 A Yes. They're all retail funds.

16 Q What is a retail fund?

17 A It typically constitutes funds that are subject to the
18 Investment Company Act of 1940, such as open-end mutual funds,
19 closed-end funds, ETFs.

20 Q Obviously, you know who my clients are. Are any of my
21 clients so-called retail funds that you just described?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Name them, please.

24 A You've got NexPoint Capital, Inc., Highland Income Fund,
25 and NexPoint Strategic Opportunities Fund.

1 Q Do those three retails funds hold any voting preference
2 shares in the CLOs that the Debtor manages?

3 A Yes.

4 MR. RUKAVINA: Mr. Vasek, if you'll please pull up
5 Exhibit 2.

6 Your Honor, I believe I have a stipulation with Mr. Morris
7 that this exhibit can be admitted, so I'll move for its
8 admission.

9 MR. MORRIS: No objection, Your Honor.

10 THE COURT: All right. Exhibit 2 will be admitted.
11 And let's be clear. That appears at -- is it Docket No. --
12 let's see. Is it 1673 that you have your -- no, no, no, no.
13 1670? Is that where your exhibits are?

14 MR. RUKAVINA: No, Your Honor. It's 1863. I think
15 we did an amended one because we numbered our exhibits instead
16 of having seventeen Os and Ps. So it's 1863.

17 THE COURT: 1863? Okay. All right. There it is.
18 Okay. Again, this is -- I'm sorry. I got sidetracked. What
19 exhibit? It's Exhibit 2, is admitted. Okay.

20 MR. RUKAVINA: Thank you, Your Honor.

21 (Certain Funds and Advisors' Exhibit 2 is received into
22 evidence.)

23 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

24 Q Real quick, Mr. Seery. What do these HIF, NSOF, NC, what
25 do they stand for? Do they stand for the retail funds you

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1 just named?

2 MR. SEERY: I don't think he meant me.

3 THE WITNESS: Yeah.

4 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

5 Q I'm sorry, Mr. Post. I didn't hear you.

6 A You addressed me as Mr. Seery.

7 Q Oh. I apologize. What do those initials stand for?

8 A The names of the funds that I mentioned.

9 Q Okay. And what do these percentages show?

10 A The percentages show the amount of shares outstanding and
11 the preference shares that each of the respective funds hold
12 of the named CLOs.

13 Q And those CLOs on the left there, those are the CLOs that
14 the Debtor manages pursuant to agreements, correct?

15 A Yes. Those are some of them, correct.

16 Q Yes. The ones that the retail funds you mentioned have
17 interests in, correct?

18 A Correct.

19 Q And what does the far-right column summarize or show?

20 A That would be the aggregate across the three retail funds.

21 Q In each of those CLOs?

22 A Correct.

23 Q Thank you.

24 MR. RUKAVINA: Mr. Vasek, you may pull this down.

25 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

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1 Q Mr. Post, in the aggregate, how much do those three retail
2 funds have invested in those CLOs, ballpark?

3 A I believe it's approximately \$130 million, give or take.

4 Q Is it closer to 140 or 130?

5 A A hundred -- I think it's 140, actually.

6 Q Okay. Thank you. Who controls those three retail funds?

7 A Ultimately, the board --

8 Q And what --

9 A -- of the funds.

10 Q What is -- what do you mean by the board? Do they have
11 independent boards?

12 A Yes. They have a majority independent board, the funds
13 do.

14 Q Do you report to that board?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Does Mr. Dondero sit on those boards?

17 A He does not.

18 Q Okay.

19 MR. RUKAVINA: I'll pass the witness, Your Honor.

20 Thank you, Mr. Post.

21 THE COURT: All right. Any other Objector
22 examination of Mr. Post?

23 All right. Mr. Morris, do you have cross?

24 MR. MORRIS: Yes, Your Honor, I do.

25 THE COURT: Okay.

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Post - Cross

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1 CROSS-EXAMINATION

2 BY MR. MORRIS:

3 Q Mr. Post, can you hear me okay, sir?

4 A Yes, I can hear you.

5 Q Okay. Nice to see you again. When did you first join
6 Highland?

7 A I believe it was July of '08.

8 Q So you've worked with the Highland family of companies for
9 about a dozen years now; is that right?

10 A Yes.

11 Q And you were actually employed by the Debtor from 2008
12 until October 2020; is that right?

13 A Correct.

14 Q And you left at that time and went to join Mr. Dondero as
15 the chief compliance office of the Advisors; do I have that
16 right?

17 A Yes. I transitioned to NexPoint Advisors shortly, I
18 believe, after Mr. Dondero left, but I was already the named
19 CCO for that entity.

20 Q Right, but your employment status changed from being an
21 employee of the Debtor to being an employee of NexPoint; is
22 that right?

23 A Correct.

24 Q And that happened shortly after Mr. Dondero resigned from
25 the Debtor and went to NexPoint Advisors, correct?

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1 A Correct.

2 Q Okay. You mentioned that the funds are controlled by
3 independent boards; do I have that right?

4 A It's a majority independent board, correct.

5 Q Okay. There's no independent board member testifying in
6 this hearing, is there?

7 A I --

8 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, Mr. Post wouldn't know
9 that, but I'll stipulate to that as a fact.

10 THE COURT: All right.

11 MR. MORRIS: Okay.

12 BY MR. MORRIS:

13 Q Did you -- do you speak with the board members from time
14 to time?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Did you tell them that it might be best if they came and
17 identified themselves and helped persuade the Court that they
18 were, in fact, independent?

19 A They have counsel to assist them with that determination.
20 I never mentioned anything along those line to them.

21 Q Okay. Can you tell me who the board members are?

22 A Yes. Ethan Powell, Bryan Ward, Dr. Bob Froehlich, John
23 Honis, and then Ed Constantino. He is only a board member,
24 though, for NSOF. NexPoint Strategic Opportunities Fund.

25 Q All right. Mr. Honis, is he -- has he been determined to

1 be an interested director, for purposes of the securities
2 laws?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Okay. Mr. Froeh..., do you know much about his
5 background?

6 A I believe he worked at Deutsche Bank and a couple of the
7 other -- or maybe a couple of other investment firms in the
8 past. And he also owns a minor league baseball team.

9 Q Do you know how long he served as a director of the funds?

10 A I don't know, approximately. I think maybe seven -- six,
11 seven years.

12 Q Okay. How about Mr. Ward? Did Mr. Froehlich ever work
13 for Highland?

14 A Not that I can recall.

15 Q Did Mr. Ward ever work for Highland?

16 A Not that I can recall.

17 Q Do you recall how long he's been serving as a director of
18 the funds?

19 A Mr. Ward?

20 Q Yes.

21 A I believe -- I'd be -- I don't recall specifically. I
22 think it's been, you know, 10 to 12 years, give or take.

23 Q He was a director when you got to Highland; isn't that
24 right?

25 A He was on the board of directors.

1 Q Yeah. So fair to say that Mr. Ward has been a director
2 since at least the mid to late oughts? 2005 to 2008?

3 A I'm sorry, you cut out. Late what?

4 Q The late oughts. Withdrawn. Is it fair to say that Mr.
5 Ward's been a director of the funds since somewhere between
6 2005 and 2008?

7 A Again, I don't recall specifically. You know, I joined
8 the complex, the retail complex as the named CCO in 2015, and
9 he had been serving in that role prior to that, and I believe
10 it was for probably a period of five to seven years, so that
11 sounds in line.

12 Q Did you have a chance to review Dustin Norris's testimony
13 from the December 16th hearing?

14 A I did not.

15 Q Do you know -- are you aware that he testified at some
16 length regarding the relationship of each of these directors
17 to Mr. Dondero and Highland?

18 A I didn't review anything, so I don't know what he said or
19 how long it took.

20 Q Do you know if Mr. Powell's ever worked for Highland?

21 A He has.

22 Q Do you know in what capacity and during what time periods?

23 A He was -- I think his last title was -- I believe was
24 chief product strategist, I believe. And he was also the
25 named PM for one of -- or, a suite of ETF funds. I think he

1 was last employed maybe --from my recollection, 2014,
2 possibly. Or 2015. Somewhere around in there.

3 Q Okay. And to the best of your knowledge, did Mr. Dondero
4 appoint Mr. Powell to be the chief product strategist?

5 A I don't -- I don't know. I wasn't involved in the
6 decision for his appointment. I don't know how he attained
7 that role.

8 Q To the best of your knowledge, did Mr. Dondero appoint Mr.
9 Powell as the PM of the ETF funds?

10 A Again, I wasn't involved in that determination, but he
11 probably would have had a role in making the determination on
12 who was the PM, along with probably some other investment
13 professionals.

14 Q Okay. And did Mr. Powell join the board of the funds
15 before or after he left Highland around 2015?

16 A I can't recall specifically if he was already on the board
17 or was an interested member, but I believe he, you know, I
18 believe he joined shortly after he left.

19 Q Okay. So he went from being an employee and being a
20 portfolio manager at Highland to being on the board of these
21 funds. Do I have that right?

22 A Again, I can't recall specifically. He may have already
23 been on the board as an interested board member. But, you
24 know, I believe, you know, if that wasn't the case, he would
25 have joined the board shortly after leaving.

1 Q And Mr. Ward, I think you said, has been on the funds'
2 board since somewhere between 2005 and 2008. Does that sound
3 right?

4 A I think that was a time frame you referenced, and I think
5 that was kind of in line, walking it back. But I don't recall
6 specifically when he joined.

7 Q And to the best of your knowledge, have the Advisors for
8 which you serve as the chief compliance officer managed the
9 Funds for which Mr. Ward has served as a director since the
10 time he became a director?

11 A I'm sorry. Can you repeat the question?

12 Q Yeah. I'm just trying to understand if the advisors --
13 withdrawn. The Advisors manage the Funds; do I have that
14 right?

15 A They provide investment advice on behalf of the Funds.

16 Q And they do that pursuant to written agreements; do I have
17 that right?

18 A Correct.

19 Q And is it your understanding that, for the entire time
20 that Mr. Ward has served as a member of the board of the
21 Funds, the Advisors have provided the investment advice to
22 each of those Funds?

23 A Yes, in one form or fashion. I believe at one period in
24 time, historically, the Advisor may have changed its name, but
25 it would have been, you know, at the end of the day, one or

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1 more -- one of either NexPoint Advisors or Highland Capital
2 Management Fund Advisors would have advised those Funds.

3 Q Is it fair to say that each of the Advisors for which you
4 serve as the chief compliance officer has always been managed
5 by an Advisor owned and controlled by Mr. Dondero?

6 A I believe so, yes.

7 MR. MORRIS: I have no further questions, Your Honor.

8 THE COURT: All right. Any redirect?

9 MR. RUKAVINA: Yes.

10 THE COURT: Okay. Mr. Rukavina?

11 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, was I on mute? I
12 apologize.

13 THE COURT: Yes.

14 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

15 BY MR. RUKAVINA:

16 Q Mr. Post, why did you leave Highland?

17 A It -- because I was a HCMLP employee and it was --
18 basically, there was conflicts that were created by being an
19 employee of the Debtor and by also serving as the CCO to the
20 named Funds and the Advisors, and it coincided with Jim
21 toggling over from HCMLP to NexPoint. It just made sense more
22 functionally and from a silo perspective for me to be the
23 named CCO for that entity since he was no longer an employee
24 of HCMLP.

25 Q And by Jim, you mean Jim Dondero?

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1 A Yes, sorry. Jim Dondero.

2 Q You're not some kind of lackey for Mr. Dondero, where you
3 go wherever he goes, are you?

4 MR. MORRIS: Objection to the question.

5 THE WITNESS: No.

6 THE COURT: Overruled. He can answer.

7 MR. RUKAVINA: Okay.

8 THE WITNESS: No.

9 MR. RUKAVINA: Okay. Thank you, Your Honor. I'll
10 pass the witness.

11 THE COURT: Any other Objector examination?

12 All right. Any recross, Mr. Morris?

13 RECROSS-EXAMINATION

14 BY MR. MORRIS:

15 Q Just one question, sir. The conflicts that you just
16 mentioned, they were in existence for the one-year period
17 between the petition date and the date you left; isn't that
18 right?

19 A I think -- I believe so, and I think they became more
20 evident as, you know, time progressed.

21 Q Okay. But they existed on day one of the bankruptcy
22 proceeding; isn't that right?

23 A Yes, I believe so.

24 Q All right.

25 MR. MORRIS: No further questions, Your Honor.

1 THE COURT: All right. Thank you, Mr. Post. You're
2 excused from the virtual witness stand.

3 (The witness is excused.)

4 THE COURT: All right. Your next witness?

5 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, my exhibit has been
6 admitted, I promised I'd be short, and my evidentiary
7 presentation is done. Thank you.

8 THE COURT: All right. Well, Mr. Taylor, your
9 evidence?

10 MR. TAYLOR: First of all, given the testimony that
11 we have received just recently, we have released Mr. Sevilla
12 from his subpoena and are not going to call him.

13 With that being said, we do have some documents that we
14 would like to get into evidence. We filed our witness and
15 exhibit list at **Docket No. 1874**. I don't believe any of these
16 are controversial. I'm trying to keep from duplicating those
17 that are already into evidence by the Debtor. And therefore I
18 would like to offer into evidence Exhibits No. 6 through 12
19 and 17. And that is it, Your Honor.

20 THE COURT: Okay. Is there any objection to Dondero
21 Exhibits 6 through 12 and 17, appearing at **Docket 1874**?

22 MR. MORRIS: I just want to be clear that Exhibits 6
23 and 7, which are letters, I believe, from Mr. Lee (phonetic)
24 are not being offered for the truth of the matter asserted in
25 either letter.

1 MR. TAYLOR: That is correct, Your Honor. Just
2 merely that those requests and the words that were stated in
3 there were indeed sent on those dates.

4 MR. MORRIS: And the same comment, Your Honor, with
5 respect to Exhibits 9 through 12, that those documents are not
6 being offered for the truth of the matter asserted.

7 MR. TAYLOR: Again, just that those requests were
8 sent and those responses as stated were sent.

9 And I apologize. I missed one, Your Honor. Also No. 15.
10 6 through 12, 15, and 17.

11 MR. MORRIS: Your Honor, the Debtor has no objection
12 to Exhibits 15, 16, and 17.

13 THE COURT: All right. So, so they are all admitted
14 with the representation that 6 and 9 through 12 are not being
15 offered for the truth of the matter asserted. With that
16 representation, you have no objection, Mr. Morris?

17 MR. MORRIS: That's right. I do just want to get
18 confirmation that Exhibits 1 through 5 and 13 through 16 -- 13
19 and 14 are not being offered at all.

20 THE COURT: Mr. Taylor?

21 MR. TAYLOR: So, that -- that is correct. 1 through
22 5 would be duplicative of what has already been introduced
23 into the record by Mr. Morris, so I am not offering those.
24 And do not believe that 13 and 14 are relevant anymore, and so
25 therefore did not offer those.

1 THE COURT: Okay. So, with that, I have admitted 6
2 through 12, 15, 16, and 17 at Docket Entry 1874.

3 (Dondero Exhibits 6 through 12 and 15 through 17 are
4 received into evidence.)

5 THE COURT: All right. Anything else, Mr. Taylor?

6 MR. TAYLOR: No, Your Honor. We are not calling any
7 witnesses.

8 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Draper, what about you?
9 Any evidence?

10 MR. DRAPER: No evidence or witnesses. The evidence
11 that's been introduced by Mr. Taylor and Mr. Rukavina are
12 sufficient for me.

13 THE COURT: All right. Ms. Drawhorn, anything from
14 you?

15 MS. DRAWHORN: No additional evidence, Your Honor.

16 THE COURT: All right. Well, then, Mr. Morris, did
17 you have anything in rebuttal?

18 MR. MORRIS: No, Your Honor. I think we can proceed
19 to closing statements. I would just appreciate confirmation
20 by the Objecting Parties that they rest.

21 THE COURT: All right. Well, I guess we'll get that
22 clear if it is isn't clear. All of the Objectors rest.
23 Confirm, yes, Mr. Rukavina?

24 MR. RUKAVINA: Confirm.

25 THE COURT: And Mr. Taylor?

1 MR. TAYLOR: Confirmed, Your Honor.

2 THE COURT: Okay. And Draper and Drawhorn?

3 MR. DRAPER: Yes, Your Honor.

4 MS. DRAWHORN: Confirmed, Your Honor.

5 THE COURT: All right. By the way, I assume Mr.

6 Dondero has been participating this morning. I didn't

7 actually get that clarification before we started. Mr.

8 Taylor, is he there with you this morning?

9 MR. TAYLOR: Your Honor, he is. He has been
10 participating. He is sitting directly to my left about
11 slightly more than six feet apart.

12 THE COURT: Okay. All right. Good.

13 All right. Well, let's talk about our closing arguments
14 and let me figure out, do we have -- should we break a bit
15 before starting? I have an idea in my brain about a time
16 limitation, but before I do that, let me ask. Mr. Morris,
17 first I'll ask you. How much time do you think you need for a
18 closing argument?

19 MR. MORRIS: Your Honor, --

20 MR. POMERANTZ: Your Honor?

21 MR. MORRIS: -- I'll defer to Mr. Pomerantz, who's
22 going to deliver that portion of our presentation today.

23 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Pomerantz?

24 MR. POMERANTZ: Your Honor, I will be making -- yes,
25 Your Honor. I will be making the majority portion of the

1 argument. Mr. Kharasch will be making the portion of the
2 argument dealing with the Advisor and Funds' objection. But I
3 expect my closing to be quite lengthy, given the 1129
4 requirements, all the legal issues, which I plan to spend a
5 fair amount of time. So I would anticipate a range of an hour
6 and 45 minutes.

7 THE COURT: An hour and 45 minutes? All right.
8 Well, --

9 MR. POMERANTZ: Correct.

10 THE COURT: I'm getting an echo.

11 MR. CLEMENTE: Your Honor, it's Matt Clemente on
12 behalf on the Committee. I'll have 15 minutes or less, Your
13 Honor. Just some things I would like to touch on.

14 THE COURT: All right. So, two hours. If I were to
15 --

16 MR. POMERANTZ: And then you need, Your Honor, to add
17 Mr. Kharasch. I think he's on. He can indicate how long his
18 part of the closing will be.

19 THE COURT: Mr. Kharasch?

20 MR. KHARASCH: Yes. I would figure my argument would
21 probably be about 20 minutes to 30 minutes.

22 THE COURT: Okay.

23 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, let me interject something
24 that I think will help everyone out. With the CLOs having
25 consented through their counsel to the assumption, the bulk of

1 my objection is now moot. We no longer can and will argue
2 that the contracts are unassignable under 365(b) or (c)
3 because we do have now their consent. So that will hopefully
4 help the Debtor on that issue.

5 MR. KHARASCH: Your Honor, Ira Kharasch again. I was
6 not anticipating that. I believe that that will take away the
7 bulk of my argument. I'm still going to be dealing with some
8 of the other non-assumption-type arguments raised by the CLO
9 Objectors, kind of dovetailing with Mr. Pomerantz's arguments
10 on the injunction. But that will greatly reduce, Your Honor,
11 my argument.

12 THE COURT: All right. So if I say two hours of
13 argument for the Debtor and Creditors' Committee, Rukavina,
14 Taylor and Draper and Drawhorn, can you collectively manage to
15 share that two hours? Have a two-hour argument in the
16 aggregate? That seems fair to me.

17 MR. RUKAVINA: Your Honor, I think -- I think that's
18 fine, Your Honor.

19 THE COURT: All right. And I guess I'll --

20 MR. TAYLOR: This is Mr. Taylor. And yes, I agree.

21 THE COURT: Okay. And Mr. Draper?

22 MR. DRAPER: This is Douglas Draper. I agree. I
23 agree also, Your Honor.

24 THE COURT: All right. And I'm going to ask --

25 MR. POMERANTZ: Your Honor, I --

1 THE COURT: Go ahead.

2 MR. POMERANTZ: Your Honor, we -- I think we may need
3 like two hours and ten minutes, because mine was 1:45, Mr.
4 Clemente was 15, and then Mr. Kharasch. But we'll be around
5 that. And I tend to speak fast, so I might even shorten mine.

6 THE COURT: Okay. You negotiated me up to two hours
7 and ten minutes, Debtors/Objectors, each.

8 I'm going to ask one more time. The U.S. Trustee lobbed a
9 written objection, but we've not heard anything from the U.S.
10 Trustee. Are you out there wanting to make an oral argument?

11 MS. LAMBERT: Yes, Your Honor. The United States
12 Trustee is on the line. And we've been listening to the
13 hearing. I can turn my video on. I think you're --

14 THE COURT: Yes. I can hear you. I can't see you.

15 MS. LAMBERT: Okay. All right. And so the U.S.
16 Trustee feels that the issues about the releases have been
17 adequately joined and raised by the other parties and that
18 it's an issue of law. The U.S. Trustee does not feel that we
19 can add to that dialogue by, you know, wasting more of the
20 Court's time. I think it's been adequately briefed and it's
21 been adequately argued here today.

22 THE COURT: Okay.

23 MS. LAMBERT: And we do have an agreement to include
24 governmental release language in the order. I understand that
25 agreement is still being honored. That's a separate agreement

1 than the issue of whether the releases are precluded. But
2 we're going to let the other people carry the water on that.

3 THE COURT: Okay.

4 MR. POMERANTZ: Yeah. And that is correct. That is
5 correct, Your Honor. They asked for some information -- a
6 provision on government releases. They also asked for a
7 provision regarding joint and several liability for Trustee
8 fees.

9 As I mentioned previously, the IRS has asked for a
10 provision in the confirmation order, as have the Texas Taxing
11 Authorities.

12 We have not uploaded a proposed confirmation order, but I
13 will state right now on the record that, before we do so, we
14 will, of course, give Ms. Lambert, Mr. Adams, and the Texas
15 Taxing Authorities the opportunity to review. We expect there
16 won't be any issue because the language has already been
17 agreed to.

18 THE COURT: All right. Well, how about this. It's
19 11:23 Central time. Let's break until 12:00 noon Central
20 time, okay, so that gives everyone a little over 30 minutes to
21 have a snack and get their notes together, and we'll start
22 with closing arguments at 12:00 noon. All right? So we're in
23 recess until then.

24 THE CLERK: All rise.

25 (A recess ensued from 11:24 a.m. until 12:05 p.m.)

1 THE COURT: All right. Please be seated. All right.

2 This is Judge Jernigan. We are back on the record in
3 Highland. Let me make sure we have the people we need. Do we
4 have the Pachulski team there? Mr. Pomerantz, Mr. Kharasch?

5 MR. POMERANTZ: Yes, you do, Your Honor.

6 THE COURT: All right. For our Objectors, Mr.
7 Taylor, are you there?

8 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Your Honor, I am.

9 THE COURT: All right. I see Mr. Draper there on the
10 video. You're there.

11 MR. DRAPER: I'm here. Can you hear me?

12 THE COURT: I can hear you loud and clear, yes.

13 MR. DRAPER: Great, because I didn't -- I'm not
14 hearing, something so I apologize.

15 THE COURT: All right. So we have Mr. Rukavina, and
16 I think I see Mr. Hogewood there as well. Is that correct?
17 You're ready to go forward?

18 MR. RUKAVINA: Yes, Your Honor.

19 THE COURT: All right.

20 MR. RUKAVINA: Yes, Your Honor. Good afternoon.

21 THE COURT: All right. And Ms. Drawhorn, you're
22 there?

23 MS. DRAWHORN: Yes, Your Honor.

24 THE COURT: Okay. Committee. Mr. Clemente, are you
25 there?

1 MR. CLEMENTE: Yes, Your Honor. I'm here, Your
2 Honor.

3 THE COURT: Okay. Very good. All right. So, let me
4 reiterate. We've given two-hour and 10-minute time
5 limitations for the Debtor, and that'll be both any time you
6 reserve for rebuttal and your closing, initial closing
7 argument. Mr. Clemente, you're going to be in that time frame
8 as well. Okay?

9 MR. CLEMENTE: Yes, Your Honor.

10 THE COURT: And so, as supporters of the plan.

11 And then, of course, the Objectors, they have collectively
12 two hours and ten minutes.

13 A couple of things. I'm going to have my law clerk, Nate,
14 who you can't see but he's to my right, he's going to keep
15 time. I promise I won't be a jerk and cut anyone off
16 midsentence, but please don't push the limit if I say, you
17 know, "Time."

18 The other thing I will tell you is I'll probably have some
19 questions here or there. And I've told Nate, cut off the
20 timer if we're in a question-answer session. I won't count
21 that as part of the two hours and ten minutes.

22 All right. So, with that, Mr. Pomerantz, you may begin.

23 CLOSING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE DEBTOR

24 MR. POMERANTZ: Thank you, Your Honor. As Your Honor
25 is aware, the Debtor has been able to resolve all objections

1 to confirmation other than the objection by Mr. Dondero or his
2 entities and the United States Trustee.

3 Your Honor, I have a very lengthy closing argument, given
4 the number of issues that are raised in the objections, and I
5 want to make a complete record, since I understand that
6 there's a good likelihood that (garbled) appeal.

7 With that in mind, Your Honor, I'm prepared to go through
8 each and every confirmation requirement in Section 1129.
9 However, as an alternative, I might propose that I can go
10 through each of the Section 1129 requirements that are the
11 subject of pending objections or otherwise depend upon
12 evidence that Your Honor has heard.

13 THE COURT: Okay.

14 MR. POMERANTZ: And of course, I'll be happy to
15 answer any questions that you have in the process.

16 THE COURT: Okay.

17 MR. POMERANTZ: And after my closing argument, I will
18 turn it over to Mr. Kharasch to address the Advisor and Funds'
19 objections.

20 THE COURT: Okay.

21 MR. POMERANTZ: Before I walk the Court through the
22 confirmation requirements, I did want to note for the Court,
23 as I did previously, that we filed an updated ballot summary
24 at **Docket No. 1887**. And as reflected in the summary, Classes
25 2 and 7 have voted to accept the plan with the respective

1 numerosity and amounts required. In fact, the votes are a
2 hundred percent.

3 Class 8, however, has voted to reject the plan. Seventeen
4 creditors in Class 8 voted yes and 24 objectors, which are, I
5 think, all but one the employees with one-dollar claims for
6 voting purposes, voted against.

7 In dollar amount, Class 8 has accepted the plan by 99.8
8 percent of the claims. And I will address the issues of the
9 cram-down over that class a little bit later on.

10 Lastly, during the course of my presentation, I will
11 identify for the Court certain modifications we have made to
12 address the objections that were filed on January 22nd and
13 then also on February 1st. And at the end of my presentation,
14 I will raise a couple of other modifications that I won't get
15 to during my presentation and will explain to the Court why
16 all the modifications do not require resolicitation and are
17 otherwise appropriate under Section 1127.

18 Your Honor, as Your Honor is aware, Section 1129 requires
19 the Debtors to demonstrate to the court that the plan
20 satisfies a number of statutory requirements. 1129(a)(1)
21 provides that the plan requires -- complies with all statutory
22 provisions of Title 11, and courts interpreted this provision
23 as requiring the debtor to demonstrate it complies with
24 Section 1122 and 1123.

25 With respect to classification, Your Honor, there has been

1 one objection that was raised to essentially a classification,
2 and that was raised by Mr. Dondero to Article 3C of the plan
3 on the grounds that it purports to eliminate a class that did
4 not have any claims in it as of the effective date but which
5 may later have a claim in that class.

6 I think he was primarily concerned about Class 9
7 subordinated claims. But Mr. Dondero misunderstands the
8 provision. It only eliminates a claim for voting purposes,
9 and if there's later a claim in that class, it will be treated
10 as the plan provides the treatment.

11 In any event, Class 9, as we know now, will be populated
12 by the HarbourVest claims, as well as the UBS claims and the
13 Patrick Daugherty claims, if the Court approves the settlement
14 approving those claims.

15 Next, Your Honor, Section 1123(a) contains seven mandatory
16 requirements that a plan must include. Sections 1, 2, and 3
17 of 1123(a) apply to the classification of claims and where
18 they're impaired and treatment. The plan does that.

19 There has been an objection to 1123(a)(3) raised by
20 several parties with respect to the classification and
21 treatment of subordinated claims. The concerns stem from the
22 mistaken belief that the Debtor reserved the right to
23 subordinate claims without providing parties with notice and
24 without obtaining a court order.

25 The Debtor never intended to have unilateral ability to

1 subordinate claims without affording parties due process
2 rights, and we've added some clarificatory language to so
3 provide.

4 We made changes to the plan on January 22nd, and then on
5 February 1st, and the plan addresses all those issues in
6 Article 3(j) and it talks about when a claim is going to be
7 subordinated as a non-creditor. We've also redefined the
8 definition of subordinated claims to make clear that a claim
9 is only subordinated upon entry of an order subordinating that
10 claim.

11 Mr. Dondero also objected on the grounds that the plan did
12 not contain a deadline pursuant to which the Debtor would be
13 required to seek any subordination, and we have revised
14 Article 7(b) of the plan to provide that any request to
15 subordinate a claim would have to be made on or before the
16 claim objection deadline, which is 180 days after the
17 effective date.

18 Lastly, certain former employees, Mr. Yang and Borud,
19 objection also joined by Mr. Deadman, Travers, and Kauffman,
20 objected to the inclusion of language in the definition of
21 "Subordinated Claims" that a claims arising from a Class A, B,
22 or C limited partnership is deemed automatically subordinated.
23 The concerns were that the language could broadly apply to any
24 potential claims by a former partner, and could be also read
25 to encompass claims outside the statutory scope of 510(b) or

1 otherwise relating to limited partnership interests.

2 While the Debtor does reserve the right to seek to
3 subordinate the claims on any basis, we have modified the plan
4 to address that concern and to address the concern that we're
5 not attempting to create any new causes of action for
6 subordination that don't otherwise exist under applicable law,
7 but it just preserves the parties' rights with respect to
8 subordination and deals with that at a later date.

9 Next, Your Honor, Section 1123(a)(5). I skipped over
10 1123(a)(4) because there are no objections to that provision.

11 THE COURT: Okay.

12 MR. POMERANTZ: Section 1123(a)(5), a plan must
13 provide for adequate means of implementation. And the plan
14 provides a detailed structure and blueprint how the Debtor's
15 operations will continue, how the assets will be monetized,
16 including the establishment of the Claimant Trust,
17 establishment of the Litigation Sub-Trust, the Reorganized
18 Debtor, the Claimant Trust Oversight Board. And the documents
19 precisely describing how this will occur were filed as part of
20 the various plan supplements.

21 1123(a)(7), Your Honor, requires that the plan only
22 contain provisions that are consistent with the interest of
23 equity holders and creditors with respect to the manner,
24 selection, and -- of any director, officer, or trustee under
25 the plan. And as discussed in the plan, at the disclosure

1 statement, and as testified to by Mr. Seery, the Committee and
2 the Debtor had arm's-length negotiations regarding the post-
3 effective date corporate governance and believe that the
4 selection of the claimant Trustee, the Litigation Sub-Trustee,
5 and the Claimant Trust Oversight Board are in the best
6 interest of stakeholders.

7 HCMFA has raised a particular objection, I think, to these
8 issues, but I will address it in the context of the
9 requirement under Section 1129(a)(5).

10 Your Honor, Section 1129(a)(2) requires that the plan
11 comply with the disclosure and solicitation requirements under
12 the plan. Section 1125 requires that the Debtor only solicit
13 with a court-approved disclosure statement. The Court
14 approved the disclosure statement on November 23rd, and
15 pursuant to the proofs of service on file, the plan and
16 disclosure statement were mailed, along with solicitation
17 materials that the court approved.

18 Now, there has been an objection raised by Dugaboy, and
19 also alluded to by Mr. Taylor in some of his comments before,
20 that the plan does violate 1129(a)(2) because the Debtor's
21 disclosure statement was deficient.

22 In support of that argument, Dugaboy points to the
23 reduction in the anticipated distribution to creditors from
24 the November plan analysis to the January plan analysis, and
25 argues that that reduction requires resolicitation. However,

1 those arguments are not well-taken.

2 First, none of the people making these objections were
3 solicited for their vote on the plan, or if they had been,
4 they didn't vote or decided to reject the plan. And to the
5 extent that Class 8 creditors, the distribution has gone down
6 -- that's the class that Mr. Taylor and Mr. Draper are
7 concerned about -- you don't hear the Committee, Acis,
8 Redeemer, UBS, HarbourVest, Daugherty, or the Senior Employees
9 making their argument, this argument, and they represent over
10 99 percent of the claims in that class. And in fact, of the
11 17 Class 8 creditors that have accepted the plan, 15 are
12 represented by the parties I just mentioned.

13 So who are the two creditors that they're so concerned
14 about? One is Contrarian, which is a claims trader that
15 actually elected to be treated in Class 7, and one is one of
16 the employees who voted to accept the plan.

17 Second, Your Honor, the argument conflates the difference
18 between adverse change to the treatment of a claim or interest
19 that would require a resolicitation under Section 1127 and a
20 change to the distribution that would not.

21 More importantly, Your Honor, the argument is specious.
22 As Mr. Seery testified yesterday, the material differences
23 between the analysis contained on November and late January
24 and the one we filed on February 1st were based on three types
25 of changes: an update regarding the increased value of assets

1 based upon events that had transpired during this period,
2 which included an increase in asset value, no recoveries, and
3 revenues expected to be generated by the CLO management
4 agreements; an update to the expected costs of the Reorganized
5 Debtor and the Claimant Trust as a result of the continued
6 evaluation of staffing needs, operational expenses, and
7 professional fees; and an update to reflect resolution of the
8 HarbourVest and UBS claims.

9 In the filing Monday, Your Honor, we updated the plan
10 projection, a liquidation analysis which revised the unsecured
11 claims based upon the UBS settlement that I was able to
12 disclose to Your Honor. And in the filing, the distribution
13 now revised to Class 8 creditors is now 71 percent, compared
14 to the 87 percent that was in the disclosure statement that
15 went out for solicitation.

16 Your Honor, there can be no serious argument that the
17 creditors in this case were not fully aware of the potential
18 for the UBS and HarbourVest creditors receiving claims. Your
19 Honor's UBS 3018 order granting its claim for voting purposes
20 was entered right around the time that the disclosure
21 statement was approved. And, in fact, a last-minute addition
22 to the disclosure statement disclosed the 3018 amount,
23 although the amount did not make it to the attachment to the
24 disclosure statement. And that reference, Your Honor, to the
25 UBS claim being allowed for voting purposes can be found at

1 Page 41 of Docket No. 1473.

2 And the HarbourVest settlement was filed on about December
3 23, two weeks before the voting deadline, sufficient time for
4 people to take that into consideration.

5 And as Your Honor surely knows, the hearings in this case
6 have been very well-attended by the major parties, and I
7 believe that if we went back and looked at the records of who
8 was on the WebEx system during the HarbourVest and UBS
9 hearings, you would find that representatives of basically
10 every creditor, every major creditor in this case in Class 8
11 participated.

12 Moreover, Your Honor, creditors were not guaranteed any
13 percentage recovery under the plan and disclosure statement,
14 which clearly identified the size of the claims pool as a
15 material risk.

16 Article 4(a)(7) of the disclosure statement, which is at
17 Docket 1473, is entitled "Claims Estimation" and warns
18 creditors that there can be no assurances that the Debtor's
19 claims estimates will prove correct, and that the actual
20 amount of the allowed claims may vary materially.

21 And if Dugaboy is arguing it was misled as the holder of a
22 disputed administrative claim and general unsecured claim,
23 that argument is simply preposterous.

24 Dugaboy cites several cases for the proposition that
25 deficient disclosure may warrant resolicitation, and the

1 Debtor agrees with the proposition as a general matter. But
2 if one looks at the cases that were filed -- that Dugaboy
3 cited to, it will see that they are clearly inapposite and
4 distinguishable.

5 *In re Michaelson*, the Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern
6 District of California, revoked confirmation because the
7 debtor failed to disclose in the disclosure statement a mail
8 fraud indictment of the turnaround specialist who was to lead
9 the reorganization effort and a prior Chapter 7 company he
10 drove into the ground.

11 In *In re Brotby*, the Ninth Circuit BAP affirmed a decision
12 of the Bankruptcy Court that the individual debtor's decision
13 to modify its financial projections on the eve of confirmation
14 did not require a resolicitation. And there, the financial
15 projections were off by 75 percent.

16 And in *Renegade Holdings*, the Bankruptcy Court granted a
17 motion by a group of states to revoke confirmation by the
18 debtors, who manufactured and distributed tobacco products,
19 because the debtors failed to disclose in its disclosure
20 statement that the debtor and its principals were under
21 criminal investigation for unlawful trafficking in cigarettes,
22 which was not disclosed to creditors.

23 Your Honor, none of these cases are remotely analogous to
24 this case, and they certainly do not stand for the proposition
25 that the Debtor was required to resolicit.

1 Next, Your Honor, the next requirement is 1129(a)(3),
2 which requires that any plan be proposed in good faith. As
3 Mr. Seery testified at length, and the Court has personal
4 knowledge of, having presided over this case for a year, the
5 plan is the result of substantial arm's-length negotiations
6 with the Committee over a period of several months.

7 Mr. Seery testified yesterday that, soon after the board
8 was appointed, the Committee wanted to immediately pursue down
9 the path of an asset monetization plan. However, as Mr. Seery
10 testified, the board decided that it was inappropriate to rush
11 to judgment and that it should consider all potential
12 restructuring alternatives for the Debtor. And Mr. Seery
13 testified what those alternatives were: a traditional
14 restructuring and continuation of the Debtor's business; a
15 potential sale of the Debtor's assets in one or more
16 transactions; an asset monetization plan like the one before
17 the Court today; and, last but not least, a grand bargain plan
18 that would involve Mr. Dondero sponsoring the plan with a
19 substantial equity infusion.

20 As Mr. Seery testified, by the early summer of 2020, the
21 Debtor decided that it was appropriate to start moving down
22 the path of an asset monetization plan while it continued to
23 work on the grand bargain plan. Accordingly, Mr. Seery
24 testified that the Debtor commenced good-faith negotiations
25 with the Committee regarding the asset monetization plan, and

1 that those negotiations took several months, were hard-fought
2 and at arm's-length, and involved substantial analysis of the
3 appropriate post-confirmation corporate structure, governance,
4 operational, regulatory, and tax issues. And on August 12th,
5 Your Honor, the plan was filed with the Court.

6 And although the Debtor at that time had not reached an
7 agreement with the Committee on some of the most significant
8 issues, Mr. Seery testified that the independent board
9 believed that it was important to file that plan at that time,
10 a proverbial stake in the ground to act as a catalyst for
11 reaching a consensual plan with the Committee or others, which
12 it has done.

13 As Mr. Seery testified, he continued to work with Mr.
14 Dondero to try to achieve a grand bargain plan, while at the
15 same time proceeding down the path of the filed plan.

16 He testified that the parties participated in mediation at
17 the end of August and early September to try to reach an
18 agreement on a grand bargain plan, but were unsuccessful. And
19 the Debtor proceeded on the path of the August 12th plan and
20 sought approval of its disclosure statement on August 27th,
21 2020.

22 Mr. Seery testified that, at that time, the Debtor still
23 had not reached an agreement with the Committee on certain
24 significant issues involving post-confirmation governance and
25 the scope of releases. And as a result, after a contested

1 hearing, Your Honor, Your Honor did not approve the disclosure
2 statement on October 27th, but asked us to go back again to
3 try to work out the issues, and we came back on November 23rd.

4 Mr. Seery testified that the Debtor continued to negotiate
5 with the Committee to resolve the material disputes leading --
6 which led up to the November 23rd hearing, where we came in
7 with the support of the Committee. But as Mr. Seery has also
8 testified, he has continued to try to reach a consensus on a
9 global plan, notwithstanding the approval of the disclosure
10 statement. And he spent personally several hundred hours
11 since his appointment trying to build consensus.

12 As part of this process, Mr. Seery testified that Mr.
13 Dondero received access to substantial information regarding
14 the Debtor's assets and liabilities, most recently in
15 connection with a series of informal document requests which
16 were made at the end of December.

17 And after the Court asked the parties to again reengage in
18 efforts to try to reach a global hearing after the Debtor's
19 preliminary injunction motion, Mr. Seery testified that he and
20 the board participated in calls with Mr. Dondero and his
21 advisors and the Committee to see if common ground could be
22 attained.

23 Unfortunately, as Mr. Seery testified, the Committee and
24 Mr. Dondero were not able to reach an agreement.

25 Accordingly, Your Honor, the testimony unequivocally and

1 overwhelmingly demonstrates that the plan was proposed in good
2 faith.

3 I expect the Objectors may argue in closing that they have
4 filed a plan under seal that is a better alternative than that
5 being proposed by the plan that the Debtor seeks to confirm.
6 Your Honor, as a threshold matter, yesterday I said any
7 mention of the specifics of the recent plan would be
8 inappropriate. We are not here today to debate the merits of
9 Mr. Dondero's plan, which the Court permitted him to file
10 under seal. He had ample opportunity to file this plan after
11 exclusivity was terminated, seek approval of a disclosure
12 statement, and, if approved, solicit votes in connection with
13 a confirmation hearing, but he failed to do so.

14 What matters today, Your Honor, is whether the Debtor's
15 plan, the plan that has been accepted by 99.8 percent of the
16 amount of creditors, and opposed only by Mr. Dondero, his
17 related entities, and certain employees, meets the
18 confirmation requirements of Section 1129, which we most
19 certainly argue it does.

20 And perhaps most importantly, Your Honor, the Court
21 remarked at the last hearing that, without the Committee's
22 support for a competing plan, Mr. Dondero's plan would be dead
23 on arrival. And as you have heard from Mr. Clemente, Mr.
24 Dondero does not yet have the Committee's support.

25 Next, Your Honor, is Section 1129(a)(5). That requires

1 that the plan disclose the identity of any director,
2 affiliate, officer, or insider of the debtor, and such
3 appointment be consistent with the best interest of creditors
4 and equity holders. Courts have held that this section
5 requires the disclosure of the post-confirmation governance of
6 the reorganized entity.

7 HCMFA objects to the plan, arguing that it did not comply
8 with Section 1129(a)(5) because it didn't disclose the people
9 who would control and manage the Reorganized Debtor and who
10 might be a sub-servicer. HCMFA's objection is off-base.
11 Under the plan, Mr. Seery will be the claimant Trustee and
12 Marc Kirschner will be the Litigation Trustee. Mr. Seery
13 testified extensively about his background, and he has
14 appeared before the Court many times and the Court is familiar
15 with him. We have also introduced his C.V. into evidence.

16 As he testified, he will be paid \$150,000 per month,
17 subject to further negotiations with the Claimant Trust
18 Oversight Committee regarding the monthly amount and any
19 success fee and severance fee, which negotiation is expected
20 to be completed within the 45 days following the effective
21 date.

22 Mr. Seery also testified regarding the names of the
23 members of the Claimant Trust Oversight Committee, which
24 information was also contained in the plan supplement and it
25 generally includes the four members of the Committee and David

1 Pauker, a restructuring professional with decades of
2 restructuring experience.

3 The members of the Oversight Committee will serve without
4 compensation, except for Mr. Pauker, who Mr. Seery testified
5 will receive \$250,000 in the first year and \$150,000 for
6 subsequent years.

7 As set forth in the Claimant Trust agreement, if at any
8 time there is a vacant seat to be filled by another
9 independent member, their compensation will be negotiated by
10 and between the Claimant Trust Oversight Board and them.

11 Mr. Seery has also testified that he believed the Claimant
12 Trust will have sufficient personnel to manage its business.
13 Specifically, he has testified that he intends to employ
14 approximately ten of the Debtor's employees, who will be
15 sufficient to enable him to continue to operate the Debtor's
16 business, including as an advisor to the managed funds and the
17 CLOs, until the Claimant Trust is able to effectively and
18 efficiently monetize its assets for fair value, whether that
19 takes two years or whether that takes 18 months or whether
20 that takes longer.

21 Mr. Seery further testified that he believes that the
22 operations can be best conducted by the Debtor's employees.
23 And while he did consider the retention of a sub-servicer, he
24 ultimately decided, in consultation with the Committee, that
25 the monetization would be a lot more effective if done with a

1 subset of the Debtor's current employees.

2 The proposed corporate governance is also consistent with
3 the interests of the Debtor and its stakeholders. The Court
4 is very familiar with Mr. Seery and the Debtor, and I believe
5 that Mr. Clemente, when he comments, will say the Committee
6 can think of no better person to continue managing the
7 Claimant Trust than Mr. Seery.

8 Mr. Kirschner is also well qualified to be the Litigation
9 Trustee. His C.V. is part of the evidence that's been
10 admitted and contains additional information regarding his
11 background. And he will receive \$40,000 a month for the first
12 three months and \$20,000 a month thereafter, plus a to-be-
13 negotiated success fee.

14 There just simply can be no challenge to Mr. Seery's or
15 Mr. Kirschner's qualifications or abilities to act in a manner
16 contemplated by the plan or that their involvement is not in
17 the best interest of the estate and its creditors.

18 Your Honor, the next requirement that is objected to is
19 Section 1129(a)(7). That, of course, requires the Debtor to
20 demonstrate that creditors will receive not less under the
21 plan than they would receive if the Debtor was to be
22 liquidated in Chapter 7. And on February 1st, Your Honor, we
23 filed our updated liquidation analysis, which contains the
24 latest-and-greatest evidence to support that.

25 These documents, the updated documents, in connection with

1 the prior analysis, was provided to objecting parties in
2 advance of the January 29th deposition, and Your Honor has
3 heard the differences between the January 29th and the
4 February 1st documents being very minimal.

5 The Court heard extensive evidence and testimony from Mr.
6 Seery regarding the assumptions that went into the preparation
7 of the liquidation analysis and the differences of what
8 creditors are projected to receive under the plan as compared
9 to what they are projected to receive in a Chapter 7.

10 Such testimony also included a comparison between the
11 liquidation analysis that was filed with the plan in November,
12 the updated liquidation analysis filed on the -- or, provided
13 to parties on January 28th, and the last version, filed on
14 February 1st.

15 Mr. Seery testified that, on the revenue side, the
16 liquidation analysis was updated to include the HCLOF
17 interest, which was required as part of the settlement with
18 HarbourVest; the increase in value of certain assets,
19 including Trussway; revenue expected to be generated from
20 continued management of the CLOs; and increased recovery on
21 notes as a result of the acceleration of certain related
22 notes.

23 On the expense side, Mr. Seery testified regarding his
24 best estimate of the likely expenses to be incurred by a
25 Chapter 7 trustee -- by the Claimant Trust, including

1 personnel costs; professional costs, which increase because of
2 the litigious nature this case has become; and operating
3 expenses.

4 And lastly, on the claim side, Your Honor, Mr. Seery
5 testified that the claims numbers have been updated to include
6 the settlement from HarbourVest and initially the amount
7 approved to UBS pursuant to the 3018 order and then the
8 reduction at \$50 million based upon the settlement announced.
9 And like the prior liquidation analysis, the current analysis
10 demonstrates that creditors will fare substantially better
11 under in Chapter -- under the plan than in Chapter 7. In
12 fact, the projected recovery under the plan is 85 percent for
13 Class 7 creditors and 71.32 percent for Class 8 creditors, as
14 compared to 54.96 percent for all unsecured creditors in a
15 Chapter 7.

16 Mr. Seery also testified that expenses are expected to be
17 more under Chapter 11 than under Chapter 7, but he also
18 testified that the tens of millions of dollars in greater
19 revenue and asset recoveries under the plan will more than
20 offset the additional expenses.

21 As a result, the Court has more than sufficient
22 evidentiary basis to conclude that the Debtor has carried its
23 burden to prove that it meets the best interest of creditors
24 best.

25 But Mr. Dondero's counsel spent a lot of time crossing --

1 cross-examining Mr. Seery, in a vain attempt to demonstrate to
2 the Court that a Chapter 7 actually would be much better for
3 creditors. And this argument has also been made by Dugaboy
4 and the Advisors and the Funds.

5 Before I address these arguments on its merits, Your
6 Honor, I just wanted to remind the Court of the Objectors --
7 these Objectors' interest in this case. Mr. Dondero owns no
8 equity in the Debtor. He owns a general partner. Strand, in
9 turn, owns a quarter-percent -- a quarter of one percent of
10 the total equity in the Debtor. And Mr. Dondero's claim, it's
11 only a claim for indemnification. Dugaboy asserts two claims:
12 a frivolous administrative claim relating to the postpetition
13 management of a Multi-Strat, which, as an administrative
14 claim, if it's valid, would not even be affected by the best
15 interest of creditors test, because it would have to be paid
16 in full. And he also asserts a claim that the Debtor's
17 subsidiary -- against the Debtor's subsidiary for which it
18 tries to pierce the corporate veil.

19 Just think about it. Dugaboy, Mr. Dondero's entity, is
20 arguing that he should be able to pierce the corporate veil to
21 get at the entity that was his before the bankruptcy.

22 Dugaboy's only other interest in this case relates to a --
23 a one -- point eighteen and several-hundredths percent of the
24 equity interest of the Debtor, and that is out of the money.

25 And as I mentioned previously, Your Honor, Mr. Rukavina's

1 clients either didn't file any general unsecured claims or
2 filed them and withdrew them. Their only claim is a disputed
3 administrative claim against the Debtor that was filed a week
4 ago and which, at the appropriate time, the Debtor will
5 demonstrate is without merit.

6 And I understand that, just today, NexPoint Advisors also
7 filed administrative claim.

8 So I'm not going to argue to Your Honor that these parties
9 do not have standing, although their standing is tenuous, at
10 best, to assert this argument. The Court should keep their
11 relative interests in mind when evaluating the merits and the
12 good faith of this objection.

13 The principal objection, as I said, is that creditors will
14 do better in a Chapter 7. Essentially, they argue that a
15 Chapter 7 trustee can liquidate the assets just as well as Mr.
16 Seery can and not require the cost structure that is included
17 in the Debtor's plan projections. Yes, they argue that a
18 Chapter 7 will be more efficient.

19 Mr. Seery's testimony, the only testimony on the topic,
20 however, establishes that this preposterous proposition has no
21 basis in reality. Mr. Seery testified that a Chapter 7
22 trustee's mandate would be to reduce Debtor's assets as fast
23 as possible, while he will monetize assets as and when
24 appropriate to maximize the value.

25 But even if you can assume that the Chapter 7 trustee

1 could get court authority in a Chapter 7 to operate, there are
2 several reasons Mr. Seery testified why a liquidation by a
3 Chapter 7 trustee would be far worse than the plan.

4 First, Your Honor, no matter how competent the Chapter 7
5 trustee is -- and Mr. Seery did not say he is more competent
6 than anyone else out there -- the lack of a learning curve
7 that Mr. Seery established through the 13 months in this case
8 puts Mr. Seery at such a major advantage compared to a Chapter
9 7 trustee.

10 Second, Mr. Seery questioned whether the Chapter 7 trustee
11 would be able to retain the Debtor's existing professionals,
12 even assuming they were willing to be retained. I'm not sure
13 what's the Court's practice or the practice in the Northern
14 District, but in many districts around the country debtor's
15 counsel and professionals cannot be retained by Chapter 7
16 trustee, as general counsel, at least.

17 And I could just imagine, Your Honor, Mr. Dondero's
18 position if the Chapter 7 trustee actually sought to hire
19 Pachulski Stang and DSI.

20 Third, Your Honor, regardless of whether the Chapter 7
21 trustee obtained some operating authority, the market
22 perception will be that a Chapter 7 trustee will sell assets
23 for less value than would Mr. Seery as claimant Trustee. Mr.
24 Seery testified to that.

25 The argument that the Objectors make that a Chapter 7

1 process, whereby the trustee would seek court approval of
2 assets, is better for value than a process overseen by the
3 Claimant Trust Board lacks any evidentiary basis and also is
4 contradicted by Mr. Seery's testimony.

5 In fact, Mr. Seery testified that the Chapter 7 process,
6 the public process of it, would very likely result in less
7 recovery than a sale conducted in the Claimant Trust.

8 And lastly, Mr. Seery testified that it's unlikely that
9 the ten or so valuable employees who Mr. Seery is planning to
10 heavily rely on to assist him with post-confirmation would
11 agree to a work for Chapter 7 trustee. Your Honor is all too
12 familiar with the fights in the *Acis* case and Chapter 7
13 trustee, and it's just hard to believe that any of the
14 Highland employees would go work for the Chapter 7 trustee.

15 So why is Mr. Dugaboy -- why is Dugaboy and Mr. Dondero
16 actually making this objection and advocating for a Chapter 7?
17 It's because they would expect to buy the Debtor's assets on
18 the cheap from a Chapter 7 trustee, exactly what they've been
19 trying to do in this case.

20 Your Honor, moving right now to Section 1129(a)(11), that
21 requires the debtor to demonstrate that the plan is feasible.
22 In other words, it's not likely to be followed by a further
23 liquidation or restructuring. Under the Fifth Circuit law,
24 the debtor need only demonstrate that the plan will have a
25 reasonable probability of success to satisfy the feasibility

1 requirement, and the Debtor has easily met this standard.

2 As Mr. Seery testified, the Debtor's plan contemplates
3 continued operations through which time the assets will be
4 monetized for the benefit of creditors. The plan contemplates
5 that Class 7 creditors will be paid off shortly after the
6 effective date. Class 8 creditors are not guaranteed any
7 recovery but will receive pro rata distributions over a period
8 of time. Class 2, Frontier secured claim, will be paid off
9 over time, and the projections demonstrate that it will -- the
10 Debtor will have money to do so.

11 Mr. Seery testified at length regarding the assumptions
12 that went into the preparation of the projections most
13 recently filed on February 1, and based on that testimony, the
14 Debtor has clearly demonstrated that the plan is feasible.

15 Your Honor, I think that brings us to Section 1129(b). Of
16 course, again, Your Honor, if Your Honor has any other
17 questions with the sections I'm skipping over. I believe
18 we've adequately covered them in the briefs and I don't think
19 there's any objection.

20 But as I mentioned before, we have three classes that have
21 voted to reject the plan. Class 8 is the general unsecured
22 claims. They voted to reject the plan. Yes. Even though,
23 based upon the ballot summary, 99 percent of the amount of
24 claims in that class voted to accept the plan, approximately
25 24 employees voted to reject the plan. And accordingly, the

1 Debtor cannot satisfy the numerosity requirement of Section
2 1126(c).

3 I do want to briefly recount for Your Honor Mr. Seery's
4 testimony regarding the nature of the claims of the 24
5 employees who voted to reject the plan. And I'm not doing
6 this to argue that the votes from these contingent creditors
7 are not valid or that the Debtor doesn't need to satisfy the
8 cram-down requirements. The Debtor understands it needs to
9 demonstrate to the Court that Section 1129(b) is satisfied for
10 the Court to confirm the plan.

11 Rather, why I do this, Your Honor, is to provide the Court
12 with context about the nature and extent of the creditors in
13 this class as the Court determines whether the plan is, in
14 fact, fair and equitable and can be crammed down to a
15 dissenting vote.

16 Mr. Seery testified that these employees originally had
17 claims under the annual bonus plan and the deferred
18 compensation plan. And as he testified, in order for claims
19 under each of those plans to vest -- I think he referred to
20 them as be-in-the-seat plans -- the employee was required to
21 remain employed as of that date.

22 Mr. Seery testified that the Debtor terminated the annual
23 bonus plan in the middle of January and replaced it with the
24 key employee retention plan that the Court previously
25 approved.

1 Accordingly, Mr. Seery testified that no employee who
2 voted to reject the plan anymore has a claim on the annual
3 bonus plan. He also testified that, with respect to the
4 deferred compensation plan, people have contingent claims
5 under that plan and that no payments are due until May 20 --
6 2021.

7 As Mr. Seery testified, if the employees who would be
8 entitled to receive payments under the deferred compensation
9 plan do not agree to enter into a separation agreement that
10 was approved by the Court, they will be terminated before May
11 and there will no -- not longer be any deferred compensation
12 due.

13 Accordingly, while the 24 employees who voted to reject
14 the plan do technically have claims at this time they have
15 voted, Mr. Seery testified the claims will go away soon.

16 I do want to point out something that's obviously
17 painfully obvious at this point, that while Class 8 voted to
18 reject the plan, the Committee, the statutory fiduciary for
19 all unsecured creditors, supports the plan enthusiastically
20 and I believe it does so unanimously.

21 The other classes to reject the plan, Your Honor, are
22 Class 11, the A limited partnerships, and none of the holders
23 in Class B and C limited partnerships voted on the plan, so
24 cram-down is required over those classes as well. So Your
25 Honor is able to confirm the plan pursuant to the cram-down

1 procedures under 1129(b) if the Court determines that the plan
2 is fair and equitable and does not discriminate unfairly
3 against the rejecting classes.

4 Let's first turn to the fair and equitable requirement. A
5 plan is fair and equitable if it follows the absolute priority
6 rule, meaning that if a class does not receive payment in
7 full, no junior class will receive anything under the plan.
8 With respect to Class 8, no junior class -- junior class to
9 Class 8 will receive payment, and here is the key point,
10 unless Class 8 is paid in full, with appropriate interest.
11 NPA and Dugaboy -- Dugaboy in a brief filed on Monday -- argue
12 that the plan does not satisfy the absolute priority rule
13 because Class 10 and Class Equity Interests have a contingent
14 right to receive property under the plan.

15 Your Honor, this argument misunderstands the absolute
16 priority rule. Class 10 and Class Creditors will only receive
17 payment after distribution to 8 and 9, the unsecured claims
18 and the subordinated claims, are all paid in full, plus
19 interest.

20 And, in fact, Dugaboy, in its brief, to its credit, admits
21 that the argument is contrary to the Bankruptcy Court's
22 decision of Judge Gargotta in the Western District case of *In*
23 *re Introgen Therapeutics*. There, the Court was faced with a
24 similar argument by a group of unsecured creditors who argued
25 that the debtor's plan violated the absolute priority rule

1 because equity was retaining a contingent interest that would
2 only be payable if general unsecured claims were paid in full.

3 In rejecting the argument, the Court reasoned, and I
4 quote, "The only way Class 4 will receive anything is if Class
5 3, in fact, gets paid in full, in satisfaction of
6 1129(b) (2) (B) (i)," meaning that the absolute priority rule
7 would not be an issue. If Class 3 is not paid in full, Class
8 4's property interest is not -- is just -- is not just
9 valueless, it just doesn't exist.

10 Your Honor, this is precisely the situation in this case.
11 Equity interests will only receive a recovery if Class 8 and 9
12 are paid in full.

13 But Dugaboy attempts to escape the logical reading of the
14 absolute priority rule by claiming that *Introgen* was wrongly
15 decided and goes against the Supreme Court's decision in
16 *Ellers* (phonetic). Dugaboy argues that because the Supreme
17 Court decided that property given to a junior class without
18 paying a senior class in full is property, even if it's
19 worthless.

20 But Dugaboy misses the point. Like the debtor in the
21 *Introgen*, the Debtor here is not arguing that the property --
22 the absolute priority rule is not violated because the
23 contingent trust is worthless. Rather, the argument is that
24 the absolute priority rule is not violated; it's, in order to
25 receive anything on account of the junior -- of the equity,

1 the senior creditors have to be paid a hundred percent plus
2 interest.

3 In fact, Your Honor, if the plan just didn't give any
4 recovery to the equity Class 10 and 11, I bet you Dugaboy and
5 Mr. Dondero would be arguing that it violated the absolute
6 priority rule because senior classes, unsecured creditors,
7 could potentially receive more than a hundred percent of their
8 interest. And there's a case in the Southern District of
9 Texas, *In re MCorp*, where the Bankruptcy Court said that for a
10 plan to be confirmed, its stockholders eliminated, creditors
11 must not receive more than payment in full.

12 Excess proceeds, Your Honor, if any, have to go somewhere.
13 They can't go to creditors, so they have to go to equity. And
14 the absolute priority rule is not violated.

15 And how is Dugaboy harmed? They say they may want to buy
16 the contingent interests, and the lack of a marketing effort
17 violates the *LaSalle* opinion as well. And who holds the Class
18 B and Class C partnership interests that come before Dugaboy
19 that Dugaboy is concerned may have this opportunity rather
20 than them? Yes, it's Hunter Mountain, Your Honor, an entity,
21 like Dugaboy, that's owned and controlled by Mr. Dondero.

22 Accordingly, the argument that the plan violates the
23 absolute priority rule is actually a frivolous argument.

24 Turning now to unfair discrimination, Your Honor, Dugaboy
25 argued in its brief Monday that because the projected

1 distribution to unsecured creditors has gone down in the
2 recent plan projections, the discrepancy between Class 7 and
3 Class 8 is so large that that amounts to unfair
4 discrimination.

5 Again, the Court should first ask why is Dugaboy even the
6 right party to be making the objection. Its claim against the
7 Debtor to pierce the corporate veil, as I mentioned, is
8 frivolous. It's subject to objection. It didn't even bother
9 to have the claim temporarily allowed for voting purposes, as
10 did other creditors who thought they had a valid claim. Yet
11 this is another example of Mr. Dondero, through Dugaboy,
12 trying to throw as many roadblocks in front of confirmation as
13 he can.

14 But this argument, like the other ones, fails as well.
15 Class 8 contains the general unsecured creditor claims,
16 predominately litigation claims that have been pending against
17 the Debtor for years. The Debtor was justified in treating
18 the other unsecured creditors differently.

19 Class 6 consists of the PTO claims in excess of the cap,
20 which are of different quality and nature than the other
21 claims.

22 Class 7 consists of the convenience class. And it's
23 appropriate to bribe convenience class creditors with a
24 discount option for smaller claims to be cashed out for
25 administrative convenience.

1 Mr. Seery testified that when the plan was formulated, the
2 concept was to separately classify liquidated claims in small
3 amounts in Class 7 and unliquidated claims in Class 8. Mr.
4 Seery also testified that there's a valid business
5 justification to treat the -- hold business 7 -- Class 7
6 claims differently. These creditors had a reasonable
7 expectation of getting paid promptly, as compared to
8 litigation creditors, who would expect to be paid over time.

9 As the Court is aware, the litigation claims in Class 8
10 involve litigation that has been pending for several years in
11 the case of Acis, Daugherty, Redeemer, and more than a decade
12 in UBS.

13 And most importantly, as Mr. Seery testified, the
14 Committee and the Debtor had significant negotiation regarding
15 the classification and treatment provisions of the plan for
16 Class 7.

17 The Committee does have one constituent who is a Class 7
18 creditor. However, the other three creditors are all in Class
19 8 and hold claims in excess of \$200 million and supported the
20 separate classification and the different treatment.

21 So, Your Honor, discrimination, different treatment among
22 Class 7 and 8 is appropriate, and the different treatment is
23 not unfair. In the February 1 projections, the Class 8
24 creditors are estimated to receive 71.32 percent of their
25 claims, but that's just an estimate. As Mr. Seery testified,

1 the number can go up based upon the value he can generate from
2 the assets and, importantly, from litigation claims. Class 8
3 creditors could up end up receiving a hundred percent on
4 account of their claims. Class 7 creditors are fixed at 85
5 percent.

6 Giving Class 8 creditors the opportunity to roll the dice
7 and potentially get more or less than the 85 percent offered
8 to Class 7 is not at all unfair.

9 For these reasons, Your Honor, the Court has the ability
10 and should confirm the plan pursuant to the cram-down
11 provisions of 1129(b).

12 Your Honor, I'm now going to switch from the statutory
13 requirements to all the issues raised by the release,
14 injunction, and exculpation provisions.

15 I'd just like to take a brief sip of water.

16 Dugaboy -- I will first deal with the Debtor release
17 provided in Article 9(f) of the plan, which we claim is
18 appropriate. Dugaboy and the U.S. Trustee have objected to
19 the release contained in Article 9(f). Dugaboy objects
20 because it believes that the Debtor release releases claims
21 that the Claimant Trust or Litigation Trust have that have not
22 yet arisen, and the U.S. Trustee objects because it believes
23 that the release is a third-party release.

24 These objections have no merit, and they should be
25 overruled.

1 I would like to ask Ms. Canty to put up a demonstrative
2 which contains the provision Article 9(f) of the plan.

3 Your Honor, as set forth in this Article 9(f), only the
4 Debtor is granting any release. While that --

5 THE COURT: And for the record, it's 9(d)? 9(d),
6 right?

7 MR. POMERANTZ: 9(d)? 9(d), correct, Your Honor.

8 THE COURT: Yes. Okay.

9 MR. POMERANTZ: Sorry about that.

10 THE COURT: Uh-huh.

11 MR. POMERANTZ: While the release is broad, it does
12 not purport to release the claims of any third party. The
13 Claimant Trust and the Litigation Trust are only included in
14 the release as successors of the Debtor. The release is
15 specifically only for claims that the Debtor or the estate
16 would have been legally entitled to assert in their own right.

17 Section 1123(b) (3) (A) of the Bankruptcy Code provides that
18 a plan may provide for the settlement or adjustment of any
19 claims or interests belonging to the debtor or the estate, and
20 that's exactly what the Debtor release provides.

21 Accordingly, Dugaboy is wrong that the release effects a
22 release of claims that the Claimant Trust or the Litigation
23 Sub-Trust have that won't arise until after the effective
24 date. And the U.S. Trustee is simply wrong; there's no third-
25 party release aspect under the release.

1 The last point I will address on the release, Your Honor,
2 is who is being released and why and what does the evidence
3 show. The Debtor release extends to release parties which
4 include the independent directors, Strand, for actions after
5 January 9th, Jim Seery as the CEO and CRO, the Committee,
6 members of the Committee, professionals, and employees.

7 You have heard Mr. Seery's testimony that the Debtor does
8 not believe that any claims against the parties that are
9 proposed to be released actually exist. You have heard Mr.
10 Seery's testimony that he worked closely with the employees
11 and believes that not only have they all been instrumental in
12 getting the Debtor to the -- be on the cusp of plan
13 confirmation, but that also Mr. Seery is not aware of any
14 claims against them.

15 Moreover, as Mr. Seery testified, the release for the
16 employees is only conditional. He testified that the
17 employees are required to assist in the monetization of assets
18 and the resolution of claims, and if they do not like -- if
19 they do not lose their release, then any Debtor claims are
20 tolled, such that could be pursued by the Litigation Trustee
21 at a future time.

22 Lastly, I'm sure that the Dondero entities will argue that
23 someone needs to investigate claims against Mr. Seery for
24 mismanagement or for, God forbid, having failed to file the
25 2015.3 statements. Such claims are part of the continuing

1 harassment of Mr. Seery that the Dondero entities have
2 embarked on after it was apparent that nobody would support
3 their plan.

4 There is no evidence of any claims that exist, Your Honor.
5 In fact, the Committee and its professionals have watched the
6 Debtor through this case like a hawk. They have not been
7 afraid to challenge the Debtor's actions in general and Mr.
8 Seery's in particular. FTI has worked on a daily basis with
9 DSI and the company, had access to information. When COVID
10 was happening, they were looking at trades going on on a daily
11 basis.

12 So if the Committee, whose members hold approximately \$200
13 million of claims against the estate, are okay with the
14 release against the independent directors and Mr. Seery, that
15 should provide the Court with comfort to approve the releases
16 as part of the plan.

17 In summary, Your Honor, the Debtor release is entirely
18 appropriate and does not affect the release of third-party
19 claims that have not yet arisen.

20 Next, Your Honor, I want to go to the discharge. There's
21 been objections to the discharge. Dugaboy and NexPoint have
22 objected that the Debtor receiving a discharge under the plan
23 -- argue a debtor is liquidating. The objection is not well
24 taken based upon Mr. Seery's testimony regarding what it is
25 the Claimant Trust and the Reorganized Debtor plan to do after

1 the effective date, as compared to what the limitations of a
2 discharge are under 1141(d) (3) .

3 Your Honor, Article 9 of the -- 9(b) of the plan provides
4 that as -- except as otherwise expressly provided in the plan
5 or the confirmation order, upon the effective date, the Debtor
6 and its estate will be discharged or released under and to the
7 fullest extent provided under 1141(d) (A) [sic] and other
8 applicable provisions of the Bankruptcy Court. Bankruptcy
9 Code.

10 Section 1141(d) (3) provides an exception to the discharge,
11 and I'd like to have that section put up for Your Honor at
12 this point. Ms. Canty?

13 As this -- as the section reflects, and as the Fifth
14 Circuit has ruled in the *TH-New Orleans Limited Partnership*
15 case cited in our materials, in order to deny the debtor a
16 discharge under 1141(d) (3), three things must be true: (1)
17 the plan provides for the liquidation of all or substantially
18 all of the property in the estate; (2) the debtor does not
19 engage in business after consummation of the plan; and (3) the
20 debtor would be denied a discharge under 727(a) of this title
21 if the case was converted to Chapter 7. Here, only C applies.

22 With respect to A, Your Honor, while the plan does project
23 that it will take approximately two years to monetize the
24 Debtor's assets for fair value, the Debtor is just not
25 liquidating within the meaning of Section A.

1 As Mr. Seery testified, during the post-confirmation
2 period, post-effective date period, the Debtor will continue
3 to manage its funds and conduct the same type of business it
4 conducted prior to the effective date. It'll manage the CLOs.
5 It'll manage Multi-Strat. It'll manage Restoration Capital.
6 It'll manage the Select Fund, and it'll manage the Korea Fund.

7 The Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New
8 York's 2000 opinion in *Enron*, cited in our materials, is on
9 point. There, the Court found that a debtor liquidating its
10 assets over an indefinite period of time that is likely to
11 take years is not liquidating within the meaning of Section
12 1141(b) (3) (A), justifying a denial of discharge.

13 But even if we failed A, based upon Mr. Seery's testimony,
14 we would not fail B. The Debtor will be continuing to do what
15 it has done during the case, as it did before, as I said,
16 managing its business. B says the debtor does not engage in
17 the business after management. So while Mr. Seery testified
18 that it would take approximately two years, it could take
19 more, it could take less, and there is no requirement to
20 liquidate assets over a period of time.

21 Accordingly, Your Honor, the Debtor is conducting the type
22 of business contemplated by Section B so as not to just deny a
23 discharge.

24 As the Fifth Circuit said in the *TH-New Orleans* case, the
25 court granted a discharge there because it was likely that the

1 debtor would be liquidating its assets and conducting business
2 (indecipherable) years following a confirmation date. And
3 this result makes sense, Your Honor, because the Debtor will
4 need the discharge and the tenant injunctions, which I'll get
5 to in a moment, in order to prevent interference with the
6 Debtor's ability to implement the terms of the plan and make
7 distributions to creditors.

8 I would now like, Your Honor, to turn to the exculpation
9 provisions, which there's been -- there's been a lot of
10 briefing on it, and I know Your Honor is very aware of the
11 exculpation provisions and the *Pacific Lumber* case. And
12 several parties have objected to the exculpation contained in
13 the plan, based primarily on the Fifth Circuit ruling in
14 *Pacific Lumber*.

15 The exculpation provision, which is not dissimilar to what
16 is found in many plans around the country, including in plans
17 confirmed in bankruptcy courts in the Fifth Circuit, acts to
18 exculpate the exculpated parties for negligent-only acts as it
19 contains the standard carve-outs for gross negligence,
20 intentional conduct, and willful misconduct.

21 I do want to bring to the Court's attention a deletion we
22 made to the parties protected by the exculpation in the plan
23 and now -- were filed on February 1st. The definition of
24 exculpated parties included, before February 1, not only the
25 Debtor but its direct and indirect majority-owned subsidiaries

1 and the managed funds. In the plan amendment, we have deleted
2 the Debtor's direct and indirect majority-owned subsidiaries
3 and managed funds from the definition and are not seeking
4 exculpation for those entities.

5 But before, Your Honor, I address *Pacific Lumber* and why
6 the Debtor believes it does not preclude the Court from
7 approving the exculpation in this case, I do want to focus on
8 something that the Objectors conveniently ignore from their
9 argument.

10 As I mentioned in my opening argument, Your Honor, the
11 independent directors were appointed pursuant to the Court's
12 order on January 9, 2020. They have resolved many issues
13 between the Debtor and the Committee, and avoided the
14 appointment of a Chapter 11 trustee.

15 The January 9th order was specifically approved by Mr.
16 Dondero, who was in control of the Debtor at the time, and I
17 believe the transcripts that are admitted into evidence will
18 demonstrate that he was fully behind the approval of the
19 January 9th order.

20 In addition to appointing the independent directors into
21 what was sure to be a contentiously litigious case, the
22 January 9th order set the standard of care for the independent
23 directors, and specifically exculpated them from negligence.

24 You have heard Mr. Seery and Mr. Dubel testify that they
25 had input into what the order said and would have not agreed

1 to be appointed as independent directors if it did not include
2 Paragraph 10, as well as the provisions regarding
3 indemnification and D&O insurance.

4 I would like to put a demonstrative on the screen, which
5 is actually Paragraph 10 of that order. Your Honor, Paragraph
6 10, there's two concepts embedded here. First, it requires
7 any parties wishing to sue the independent directors or their
8 agents to first seek such approval from the Bankruptcy Court.
9 Secondly, and importantly for purposes of the independent
10 directors and their agents, who would include the employees,
11 it set the standard of care for them during the Chapter 11 and
12 entitled them to exculpation for negligence. Paragraph 10
13 says the Court will only permit a suit to go forward if such
14 claim represents a colorable claim for willful misconduct or
15 gross negligence.

16 And Your Honor, Paragraph 10 does not expire by its terms.
17 By not including negligence in the definition of what a
18 colorable claim might be, the Court has already exculpated the
19 independent directors and their agents, which include the
20 employees acting at their direction.

21 And because the independent directors and their agents are
22 exculpated under Paragraph 10, Strand needs to be exculpated
23 as well for actions occurring after January 9th. This is
24 because a suit against Strand for conduct after the
25 independent board was appointed is effectively a suit against

1 the independent directors, who were the only people in control
2 of Strand at that time.

3 After the effective date, Mr. Dondero will regain control
4 of Strand, as the independent directors will be discharged.
5 And for parties able to sue Strand essentially for negligence
6 for conduct conducted by the independent directors after
7 January 9th, Strand will then be able to seek indemnification
8 from the Debtor under the Debtor's partnership agreement
9 because the partnership agreement does provide the general
10 partner is entitled to indemnification.

11 Accordingly, an exculpation for Strand is really the
12 functional equivalent of an exculpation for the independent
13 directors and the Debtor.

14 The January 9th order was not appealed, and an objection
15 to exculpation at this point as it relates to the independent
16 directors, their agents, and Strand is a collateral attack on
17 this order. So, Your Honor, Your Honor does not even need to
18 get to the thorny issues addressed by *Pacific Lumber*.

19 However, even in the absence of the January 9th order,
20 exculpation of the independent directors and their employees,
21 as well as the other exculpated parties, is not prohibited by
22 *Pacific Lumber*. In *Pacific Lumber*, the Fifth Circuit reversed
23 a bankruptcy court order confirming a plan because the
24 exculpation provision was too broad and included parties that
25 the Fifth Circuit thought could not be exculpated under

1 Section 524(e) of the Code.

2 A close look at the issue before the Court, Your Honor,
3 the reasoning for the Court's ruling and why certain parties
4 like Committee and its members were entitled to exculpation,
5 reflects that this case does not prevent the Court from
6 approving exculpation of this case.

7 A careful read of the underlying briefs and opinions in
8 *Pacific Lumber* reveals that the concern that the Appellants
9 had in that case was the application of exculpation to non-
10 fiduciary sponsors. There were two competing plans in the
11 case. The first was filed by the indenture trustee. The
12 second was filed by the debtor's parent and lender, and was
13 deemed -- called the Marathon Plan. The Court confirmed the
14 Marathon Plan, and the indenture trustee appealed, and the
15 indenture trustee argued that the plan sponsors could not be
16 exculpated.

17 After determining that the appeal of the exculpation
18 provisions were not equitably moot, the Fifth Circuit
19 determined that exculpation was not authorized under 524(e) of
20 the Code because that section provides a discharge of the
21 debtor does not affect the liability of any other entity on
22 such debt.

23 However, and here's the important part, Your Honor: The
24 Fifth Circuit did not say that all exculpations are prohibited
25 under the Code and authorized the exculpation of the Committee

1 and its members. And why did the Court do that? Because it
2 looked at the Committee's qualified immunity under 1103 and
3 also reasoned that Committee members are essentially
4 disinterested volunteers that should be entitled to
5 exculpation on negligence.

6 The Court also cited approvingly *Colliers* for the
7 proposition that if Committee members were not exculpated for
8 negligence and subject to suit by people who are unhappy with
9 them, they just would not serve.

10 Accordingly, the Fifth Circuit based its willingness to
11 exculpate Committee members on the strong public policy that
12 supports exculpation for those parties under those
13 circumstances. And against this backdrop, Your Honor, there
14 are several reasons why the Court should authorize exculpation
15 in this case, notwithstanding *Pacific Lumber*.

16 First, Your Honor, the independent directors in this case
17 are analogous -- much more analogous to the Committee members
18 that the Fifth Circuit ruled were entitled to than the
19 incumbent officer and directors.

20 Your Honor has the following facts before the Court, based
21 upon the testimony of Mr. Seery and Mr. Dubel and other
22 evidence in the record. The independent board members were
23 not part of the Highland enterprise before the Court appointed
24 them on January 9th. The Court appointed the independent
25 directors in lieu of a Chapter 11 trustee to address what the

1 Court perceived as the serious conflicts of interest and
2 fiduciary duty concerns with current management, as identified
3 by the Committee.

4 The independent directors would not have agreed to accept
5 their role without indemnification, insurance, exculpation,
6 and the gatekeeper function provided by the January 9th order.

7 And Mr. Dubel testified regarding the significant
8 experience he has as an independent director during his 30-
9 plus years in the restructuring community, including several
10 engagements as an independent director in Chapter 11 cases.

11 And he testified that independent directors have become
12 commonplace in complex restructurings over the last several
13 years and have been appointed in many cases, including high-
14 profile cases. We've cited to just a few of those cases in
15 our brief, but we could go on and on.

16 Mr. Dubel testified that the independent directors are a
17 critical tool in proper corporate governance and restoring
18 creditor confidence in management in modern-day
19 restructurings, and he testified that, based upon his
20 experience, independent directors expect to be indemnified by
21 the company, expect to obtain directors and officers
22 insurance, and expect to be exculpated from claims of
23 negligence when they agree to be appointed.

24 He further testified that if independent directors cannot
25 be assured that they will be exculpated for simple negligence,

1 he believes they will be unwilling to serve in contentious
2 cases like the one we have here, which will have a material
3 adverse effect on the Chapter 11 restructuring process as we
4 know it.

5 Based upon the foregoing testimony, Your Honor, which is
6 uncontroverted, the Court should have no problem finding that
7 the independent directors are much more analogous to the
8 Committee members in *Pacific Lumber* who the Fifth Circuit said
9 could be exculpated.

10 The facts, these facts also distinguish this case from the
11 *Dropbox v. Thru* case which Your Honor decided and which was
12 reversed on this issue by the District Court. In neither
13 *Pacific Lumber* or *Thru* was there an argument that the policy
14 reasons that supported exculpation of Committee members also
15 supported the exculpation of the parties sought to be
16 exculpated.

17 Moreover, Your Honor, the independent directors in this
18 case were pointed as essentially as substitute for a Chapter
19 11 trustee. There was a Chapter 11 trustee motion filed a few
20 days before, I believe, and the Court, in approving this, said
21 that you -- better than a Chapter 11 trustee. And Chapter 11
22 Trustees are entitled to qualified immunity. So, while, yes,
23 the independent directors aren't truly Chapter 11 trustees,
24 they are analogous.

25 Second, Your Honor, while there is language in *Pacific*

1 *Lumber* that says that the directors and officers of the debtor
2 are not entitled to exculpation, the issue before the Court
3 really on appeal was the plan sponsors and whether they were.
4 So I would argue that any discussion of the exculpation not
5 being available for directors and officers in the Fifth
6 Circuit opinion in *Palco* is actually dicta.

7 Third, Your Honor, as I discussed before, the *Pacific*
8 *Lumber* decision was based solely on 524(e) of the Bankruptcy
9 Code, which only says that the discharge of a claim against
10 the debtor does not affect the discharge of a third party.
11 However, the Debtor is not relying on 524(e) as the basis of
12 their exculpation. As we outline in our brief, Your Honor, we
13 believe that the exculpation is appropriate under Section 105
14 and 1123(b) (6) as a means -- part of an implementation of the
15 plan.

16 Importantly, Your Honor, as other courts hostile to third-
17 party releases have determined, exculpation only sets a
18 standard of care for parties and is not an effort to relieve
19 fiduciaries of liability.

20 Other courts that have aligned with the Fifth Circuit and
21 rejected third-party releases, like the Ninth Circuit, have
22 recently determined exculpation has nothing to do with 524(e).
23 In *In re Blixseth*, a Ninth Circuit case decided at the end of
24 2020 cited in our materials, they examined several of their
25 circuit cases that had strongly prohibited non-consensual

1 third-party releases under 524(e). But again, the Court
2 concluded that 524(e) only prohibits third parties from being
3 released from liability of a prepetition claim for which the
4 debtor receives a discharge. The Court reasoned that the
5 exculpation clause, however, protects parties from negligence
6 claims relating to matters that occurred during the Chapter 11
7 case and has nothing to do with 524(e).

8 The Ninth Circuit, which along with the Fifth Circuit has
9 been notorious for prohibiting third-party releases, issued
10 its ruling against this backdrop and said that exculpations
11 are appropriate.

12 Your Honor, the Objectors made a point yesterday of
13 pointing out that Strand, as the Debtor's general partner, is
14 liable for the debts under applicable law. To the extent they
15 intend to argue that the exculpation is seeking to discharge
16 any such prepetition liability, they would be wrong. The
17 exculpation only applies to postpetition matters. And to the
18 extent they argue that the exculpation seeks to discharge
19 Strand's potential postpetition liability, for the reasons I
20 discussed, a claim against Strand will essentially be a claim
21 against the Debtor because the Debtor will be obligated to
22 indemnify them.

23 Accordingly, Your Honor, we submit that if this matter
24 goes up to appeal to the Fifth Circuit, which it may very well
25 do, that the Fifth Circuit may very well come out the same way

1 as the Ninth Circuit and start relaxing the standard or
2 otherwise provide that the independent directors are much more
3 like Committee members.

4 Lastly, Your Honor, if the Court does confirm the plan,
5 which we certainly hope it will do, it will have made a
6 finding that the plan has been proposed in good faith, and in
7 doing so, the Court essentially finds that the independent
8 directors and their agents have acted appropriately and
9 consistent with their fiduciary duties, and it makes --
10 exculpation for negligence naturally flows from that finding.

11 Your Honor, I would now like to go to the injunction
12 provisions, and my argument is that the injunction provisions
13 as amended are appropriate.

14 THE COURT: Can I stop you?

15 MR. POMERANTZ: We received several of -- yes.

16 THE COURT: I want to just recap a couple of things I
17 think I heard you say. You're not asking this Court, you say,
18 to go contrary to *Pacific Lumber* per se. You have thrown out
19 there the possibility that *Pacific Lumber* mistakenly relied on
20 524(e) in rejecting exculpations of plan sponsors. You're
21 saying, eh, as a technical matter, I think they were wrong in
22 focusing on that statute because that statute seems to deal
23 with prepetition liability. Okay? Its actual wording, 524(e)
24 states, discharge of a debt of a debtor does not affect the
25 liability of any other entity on such debts.

1 And reading between the lines, I think you're saying --
2 well, maybe this isn't what you're saying, but here's what I
3 inferred -- "debt" is defined in 101(12) to mean liability on
4 a claim, and then "claim" is defined in 101(5) of the
5 Bankruptcy Code as meaning right to payment. It doesn't say
6 as of the petition date, but I think if you look at, then,
7 Section 502 of the Bankruptcy Code that addresses claims and
8 interests, clearly, it seems to be referring to the
9 prepetition time period, you know, claims and interest as of
10 the petition date. And then -- that's 502. And then 503
11 speaks of, for the most part, postpetition administrative
12 expenses.

13 So that was my rambling way of saying I'm understanding
14 you to say, eh, as a technical matter, we think the Fifth
15 Circuit was wrong to focus on 524(e) because when you're
16 talking about exculpation you're talking about postpetition
17 liability, not prepetition liability. And 524(e) is talking
18 more about prepetition liability.

19 But I think what I also hear you saying is, at bottom,
20 *Pacific Lumber* was sort of a policy-driven holding where, you
21 know, we're worried about no one would ever sign up for being
22 on an unsecured creditors' committee if they could be exposed
23 to lawsuits. They're fiduciaries, we think, for policy
24 reasons. Exculpation is appropriate for this one group. And
25 you're saying, well, they didn't have an independent board

1 that they were considering. They were just considering non-
2 fiduciary plan sponsors. And so the rationale presented by
3 *Pacific Lumber* applies equally here, and just they didn't make
4 a holding in this factual context.

5 Have I recapped what you're saying?

6 MR. POMERANTZ: Your Honor, that's generally --
7 generally correct, with a couple of nuances. So, yes, first,
8 I think, on a policy basis, Your Honor -- again, putting aside
9 the January 9th order, because we don't see --

10 THE COURT: Right. Right.

11 MR. POMERANTZ: -- Your Honor even needs to get to
12 this issue.

13 THE COURT: I understand.

14 MR. POMERANTZ: But if Your Honor does get to this
15 issue, we think, as a first point, Your Honor could be totally
16 consistent with *Pacific Lumber* because there's policy reasons
17 and there was not a categorical rejection of exculpation.
18 Okay. So if there was a categorical rejection, then it
19 wouldn't have been okay for committee members. Okay.

20 Second argument, yes, we don't think -- we think it's part
21 of dicta. It's not part of the holding. We understand that
22 other courts may have not agreed, maybe your *Thru* case, which
23 Your Honor was appealed on.

24 But the third issue, our argument is all they looked at
25 was 524(e). They said 523 -- 4(e) does not authorize it.

1 They did not say 524(e) prohibits it.

2 We think there's other provisions in the Code. And then
3 when you basically add in the analysis that Your Honor
4 provided, which we agree with, and what 524 was -- to do,
5 524(e) just says that discharge doesn't affect. It doesn't
6 say that under another provision of the Code or for another
7 reason you are authorized to give an exculpation. I think
8 it's a nuance and it's a difference there.

9 And my point of bringing up the *Blixseth* case -- which, of
10 course, is Ninth Circuit and it's not binding on Your Honor,
11 it's not binding on the Fifth Circuit -- is to say, when that
12 was presented to them, they saw the distinction that 524(e)
13 has nothing to do with an exculpation. And while, yes, the
14 Fifth Circuit hasn't ruled on that, and if the Fifth -- if
15 that argument is made to the Fifth Circuit, we don't know how
16 they would rule, I think that, based upon their analysis --
17 which, again, Your Honor, is no more than a page and a half of
18 their opinion, right, of a long, lengthy opinion on the
19 confirmation issues. So I think, Your Honor, with the Fifth
20 Circuit, there is a good chance that based upon the developing
21 case law of exculpation, based upon the sister circuit in
22 *Blixseth* making that distinction, that there is a very good
23 chance that the Fifth Circuit would change.

24 But look, I recognize that argument requires Your Honor to
25 say, okay, this is outside and -- and what *Pacific Lumber* did

1 or didn't do. But I think, Your Honor, there's several
2 potential reasons, there's several potential arguments that
3 you can get to the same place.

4 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

5 MR. POMERANTZ: Okay. If I may just get another
6 glass of -- sip of water before my time starts?

7 THE COURT: Okay.

8 MR. POMERANTZ: Okay, Your Honor. We're now turning
9 to the injunction provision. The Debtor received several
10 objections to the injunction provisions in -- I think I have
11 it right now -- Article 9(f) to the plan. And we've modified
12 Article 9(f) to address certain of those concerns, and we
13 believe that, as modified, that the injunction provision
14 implements and enforces the plan's discharge, release, and
15 exculpation provisions to prevent parties from pursuing claims
16 in interest that are addressed by the plan and otherwise
17 interfering with consummation and implementation of the plan.

18 I'd like to put up the first paragraph of the injunction
19 on the screen now.

20 Okay, Your Honor. The first paragraph, all it does is
21 prohibits the enjoined parties from taking action to interfere
22 with consummation or implementation of the plan. I suspect a
23 sentence like that is probably in hundreds of plans in the
24 Fifth Circuit and elsewhere.

25 Initially, to address a concern that it applied to too

1 many parties, the Debtor added a definition in the revised
2 plan that defines "enjoined parties," which I'd like to now
3 put that definition up on the screen.

4 The changes -- it's a little hard to read there, but you
5 have it in the -- oh, there you go. The changes made clear
6 that only parties who have a relationship to this case, either
7 holding a claim or interest, having appeared in the case, be a
8 -- or be a party in interest, Jim Dondero, or related entity,
9 or related person of the foregoing are covered. The claim
10 objectors argue that the word "implementation and
11 consummation" is vague, or vague and unclear. Your Honor,
12 these terms are both defined in the Bankruptcy Code and under
13 the case law, and they're, as I said, common features of many
14 plans.

15 Section 1123(a) (5) of the Code provides that a plan shall
16 provide for its implementation, and identifies a list of items
17 that the plan can include. Article 4 of our plan is defined
18 as "Means of Implementation of This Plan," and describes the
19 various corporate steps required to implement the provisions
20 of the plan, including canceling equity interests, creation of
21 new general partners and a limited part of the Reorganized
22 Debtor, the restatement of the limited partnership agreement,
23 and the establishment of the various trusts.

24 Paragraph 1 rightly and appropriately enjoins efforts to
25 interfere with these steps.

1 Nor is the term "consummation of the plan" vague.
2 "Consummation" also is a commonly-used term and has been
3 defined by the Fifth Circuit and the Code. 1102 -- 1101(2)
4 defines "Substantial Consummation" to be the transfer of
5 assets to be transferred under the plan, the assumption by the
6 debtor of the management of all the property dealt with by the
7 plan, and the commencement of distributions under the plan.

8 Section 1142 gives the Court authority to direct a party
9 to perform any act necessary for consummation of a plan. And
10 as the Fifth Circuit, in *United States Brass Corp.*, which is
11 said in our material, states, said the Bankruptcy Court had
12 post-confirmation jurisdiction to enforce the unperformed
13 terms of a plan with respect to a matter that could affect the
14 parties' post-confirmation rights because the plan had not
15 been fully consummated.

16 And Your Honor just wrote on this issue last year in the
17 *Senior* -- the *Texas* -- the *TXMS Real Estate v. Senior Care*
18 case, and you cited to *U.S. Brass* to find that, in that case,
19 post-confirmation jurisdiction existed to resolve a dispute
20 relating to an assumed contract because the matter related to
21 interpretation, implementation, and execution of the plan.

22 Accordingly, Your Honor, neither implementation or
23 consummation are vague, and the first paragraph of the
24 injunction is necessary and appropriate to enforce the
25 Debtor's discharge.

1 As I said before, I will leave it to Mr. Kharasch to
2 address specifically the concerns that the Advisor and the
3 Funds have with the injunction.

4 The second and third paragraphs of the injunction, Your
5 Honor, certain parties have objected to them on the ground
6 that they constitute an improper release of the independent
7 directors as well as the release of claims against the
8 Reorganized Debtor, the Claimant Trust, and the Litigation
9 Sub-Trust, entities that will not have come into existence
10 until after the effective date.

11 We believe we have addressed these concerns by
12 modifications to the second and third paragraphs of the
13 injunction, which I would now like to put the second and third
14 paragraphs on the screen.

15 (Pause.)

16 MR. POMERANTZ: As that is happening, Your Honor, I
17 will -- there we go.

18 We believe that the changes that were made to these
19 paragraphs should address the Objectors' concerns.

20 First, as with the first paragraph, we have created a
21 defined term of "Enjoined Parties" who are subject to the
22 injunction which is narrower than all persons, I believe, or
23 all entities that was included in the prior plan. So we've
24 narrowed that.

25 "Enjoined Parties" are generally defined, as I mentioned

1 before, as entities involved in this case or related to Jim
2 Dondero, or have appeared in this case.

3 Second, we have removed independent directors from these
4 paragraphs to address the concern that the injunction was a
5 disguised third-party release.

6 Third, we have removed the Reorganized Debtor and the
7 Claimant Trust from the second paragraph and moved them to the
8 third paragraph. We did this to make clear that the
9 Reorganized Debtor and Claimant Trust were only getting the
10 benefit of the injunction as the successors to the Debtor. As
11 the Reorganized Debtor and the Claimant Trust receives the
12 property from the Debtor free and clear of all claims and
13 interests and equity holders under 1141(c), they are entitled
14 to the benefit of the injunction.

15 Fourth, we have addressed the concern that the injunction
16 improperly affected set-off rights. We added language to make
17 clear that the injunction would only affect the parties' set-
18 off of an obligation owed to the Debtor to the extent that
19 that was permissible under 553 and 1141 of the Bankruptcy
20 Code.

21 In other words, we are punting the issue for another day,
22 and there's nothing in the plan that gives the Debtor any more
23 set-off rights than it otherwise has under the Bankruptcy
24 Code.

25 Lastly, Your Honor, certain Objectors have argued that the

1 injunction somehow prevents them from enforcing the rights
2 they have under the plan or the confirmation order. We don't
3 really understand this concern, as the language leading into
4 the second paragraph of the injunction says, except as
5 expressly provided in the plan, the confirmation order, or a
6 separate order of the Bankruptcy Court.

7 With these modifications, Your Honor, the provisions do
8 nothing more than implement 1123(b)(6) and 1141 by preventing
9 parties from taking actions to interfere with the Debtor's
10 plan.

11 The Court has also heard testimony from Mr. Seery
12 regarding the importance of the injunction to implementation
13 of the plan. He testified that he intends to monetize assets
14 in a way that will maximize value. And to effectively do
15 that, he has testified that the Claimant Trust needs to be
16 able to pursue its objectives without interference and
17 continued harassment from Mr. Dondero and his related
18 entities.

19 In fact, Mr. Seery testified that if the Claimant Trust
20 were subject to interference by Mr. Dondero, it would take him
21 more time to monetize assets, they would be monetized for less
22 money, and creditors would be harmed.

23 If Your Honor doesn't have any questions for me on the
24 injunction provisions, I'd like to turn to the last part of
25 the injunction, which is really the gatekeeper provision.

1 THE COURT: All right. You may.

2 MR. POMERANTZ: Your Honor, the last paragraph in
3 Article 9(f) is really not an injunction but is rather a
4 gatekeeper provision. And as originally drafted, it'd do two
5 things: first, it'd require that before any entity, which is
6 defined very broadly, could file an action against a protected
7 party relating to certain specified matters, the entity would
8 have to seek a determination from this Court that the claim
9 represented are colorable claim of bad faith, criminal
10 conduct, willful misconduct, fraud, or gross negligence. The
11 specified matters to which the gatekeeper provision would
12 apply included the Chapter 11 case, negotiations regarding the
13 plan, the administration of the plan, the property to be
14 distributed under the plan, the wind-down of the Debtor's
15 business, the administration of the Claimant Trust, or
16 transactions related to the foregoing.

17 Subject to certain exceptions for Dondero-related parties,
18 protected parties were defined to include the Debtor, its
19 successors and assigns, indirect and direct, majority-owned
20 subsidiaries and managed funds, employees, Strand, Reorganized
21 Debtor, the independent directors, the Committee and its
22 members, the Claimant Trust, the Claimant Trustee, the
23 Litigation Trust, the Litigation Sub-Trustee, the members of
24 the Oversight Committee, retained professionals, the CEO and
25 CRO, and persons related to the foregoing. Essentially,

1 parties related to the pre-effective-date administration of
2 the estate or the post-confirmation implementation of the
3 plan.

4 Second, the gatekeeper provision as originally presented
5 gave the Bankruptcy Court exclusive jurisdiction to adjudicate
6 any cause of action that it determined would pass through the
7 gate. The gatekeeper provision, Your Honor, is not a release
8 in any way. Rather, it permits enjoined parties who believe
9 they have a claim against the protected parties to pursue such
10 a claim, provided they first make a showing that the claim is
11 colorable to the Bankruptcy Court.

12 Several parties, Your Honor, objected to the Bankruptcy
13 Court having exclusive jurisdiction to adjudicate the claims
14 that pass through the gate. The Debtor believes that the
15 Bankruptcy Court would ultimately have jurisdiction of any of
16 those claims that pass through the gate. However, the Debtor
17 did, upon reflection, appreciate the concern that if the Court
18 agreed to that now, it would essentially be determining its
19 jurisdiction before a claim was filed.

20 Accordingly, in the January 22nd plan, Your Honor, we
21 amended the provision to provide that the Bankruptcy Court
22 will only have jurisdiction over such claims to the extent it
23 was legally permissible to do so, essentially deferring the
24 issue to a later time.

25 And as Your Honor, I believe, in one of cases called the

1 *Icing on the Cake*, the retention and jurisdiction provisions
2 in the plan only are to the extent under applicable law and
3 are quite broad and include the things that we would have the
4 Court -- have jurisdiction for the Court, otherwise
5 determined.

6 The Court made some other changes to the gatekeeper
7 provision, and I would like to place the amended gatekeeper
8 provision on the screen right now. In addition to the change
9 I mentioned, the Debtor made the following changes: the
10 provision is limited now to apply only to enjoined parties,
11 rather than any entity. Than any entity. Much narrower. The
12 provision added the administration of the Litigation Sub-Trust
13 to the matters to which the provision would apply. The
14 provision makes clear now that any claim, including
15 negligence, is a claim that could be sought and pursued
16 through the gatekeeper function. And the provision made some
17 other syntax changes.

18 We believe, Your Honor, with these changes, we believe
19 that the gatekeeper provision is within the Court's
20 jurisdiction and it's appropriate to include under the plan.

21 But certain parties have argued that the Court does not
22 have the authority, the jurisdictional authority to perform
23 the gatekeeper function, separate and apart from whether it
24 has jurisdiction to adjudicate the claims that pass through
25 the gate.

1 Your Honor, we submit that these arguments represent a
2 fundamental misunderstanding of Bankruptcy Court jurisdiction
3 and the Court's authority to make sure the Debtor is free of
4 interference in carrying out the plan which I'll get to in a
5 couple moments.

6 As a preliminary matter, Your Honor, it is important for
7 the Court to remember that Paragraph 10 of the January 9 order
8 already contains a gatekeeper provision as it relates to the
9 independent directors and their agents. And as I mentioned on
10 a couple of occasions, that order is not going away, it
11 doesn't expire by its terms, and it cannot be collaterally
12 attacked in this forum.

13 The Debtor does acknowledge, though, that the gatekeeper
14 provision in the plan is broader in terms of the people it
15 protects and it applies to post-confirmation matters.

16 Before I address the Court's authority to approve the
17 gatekeeper provision, I want to summarize the evidence that it
18 has heard from Mr. Seery and Mr. Tauber regarding why the
19 gatekeeper is so important a provision to the success of the
20 plan.

21 Although the Court is all too familiar with the history of
22 litigation initiated by and filed against Mr. Dondero and his
23 related affiliates, Mr. Seery spent some time on the stand
24 testifying about the litigation so the Court would have a
25 complete record for this hearing. He testified that prior to

1 the petition date, the Debtor faced years of litigation from
2 Mr. Terry and Acis that led to the Acis bankruptcy case, which
3 Your Honor has said many times it's still in your mind. Years
4 of litigation with the Redeemer Committee which precipitated
5 the filing of a bankruptcy case and resulted in an award very
6 critical of the Debtor's conduct. Years of litigation with
7 UBS. Years of litigation with Patrick Daugherty. And we
8 placed all the dockets for all these matters before the Court.

9 Also, during the bankruptcy and after the Committee
10 essentially rejected the Debtor's pot plan proposal and
11 indicated -- and the Debtor indicated it would be terminating
12 the shared service agreements with Mr. Dondero and his related
13 entities, the Debtor was the subject of harassment from Mr.
14 Dondero and related entities which resulted in the temporary
15 restraining order against him, a preliminary injunction
16 against him, a contempt motion, which Your Honor is scheduled
17 to hear Friday, a motion by the Debtor's controlled -- by the
18 Dondero-controlled investors and funds in CLO managed --
19 managed by the Debtor, which the Court referred to that motion
20 as being frivolous and a waste of the Court's time. Multiple
21 plan objections, most of which are focused on allowing the
22 Debtors to continue their litigation crusade against the
23 Debtor and its successors post-confirmation. An objection to
24 the Debtor approval of the Acis order and a subsequent appeal.
25 An objection to the HarbourVest settlement and subsequent

1 appeal. A complaint and injunction against the Advisors and
2 the Funds to prevent them from violating Paragraph 9 of the
3 January 9th order. And a temporary restraining order against
4 those parties, which was by consent.

5 Mr. Dondero's counsel tends to argue that he is the victim
6 here and that the litigation is being commenced against him
7 and -- instead of by him. That response does not even deserve
8 a response, Your Honor. It is disingenuous.

9 Mr. Tauber testified that he was part of the team at Aon
10 that sourced coverage for the independent directors after
11 their appointment in January 2020 and that he has over 20
12 years of underwriting experience. He testified that at Aon he
13 builds bespoke insurance programs which are not cookie-cutter
14 programs for his clients, with an emphasis on D&O and E&O.
15 And he was asked by the independent board to obtain D&O and
16 E&O insurance after the board's appointment on January 9th.

17 Based upon the process Aon conducted in reaching out to
18 insurance carriers, Mr. Tauber testified that Aon was only
19 able to obtain D&O insurance based upon the inclusion of
20 Paragraph 10 of the January 9 order, the gatekeeper provision.
21 I know Mr. Taylor said that that was spoon-fed to the
22 insurers, but Mr. Tauber's testimony is they knew about Mr.
23 Dondero and they knew about his litigation tactics, so it is
24 not a good inference to be made from the testimony that they
25 would not have required something. They probably would have

1 just said no.

2 Aon has now been -- Mr. Tauber testified that Aon has now
3 been asked to obtain D&O coverage for the Claimant Trustee,
4 the Litigation Trustee, the Oversight Committee, the members,
5 the Claimant Trust, and the Litigation Sub-Trust. He
6 testified that he and Aon have approached the insurance
7 carriers that they believe might be interested in underwriting
8 coverage.

9 And no, he hasn't approached every D&O and E&O carrier out
10 there, and there may be, just like an investment banker
11 doesn't have to approach everyone. They are experts in the
12 field, and he testified they approached the people they
13 thought would likely be willing or interested and potentially
14 be willing to extend coverage. And as a result of Aon's
15 efforts, Mr. Tauber has determined that there's a continued
16 resistance to provide any coverage that does not contain an
17 exclusion for actions relating to Mr. Dondero or his related
18 entities. And he further believes that all carriers that will
19 -- that have discussed a willingness to provide coverage will
20 only do so if there is a gatekeeper provision, and only one
21 carrier will agree to provide coverage without a Dondero
22 exclusion.

23 Mr. Tauber testified that he believes that any ultimate
24 policy will provide that if at any time the gatekeeper
25 provision is not in place, either the carrier will not cover

1 any actions related to Mr. Dondero or his affiliates or that
2 the coverage will be vacated or voided.

3 Based upon the foregoing record, Your Honor, which is
4 uncontroverted, there's ample justification on a factual basis
5 for approval of the gatekeeper provision.

6 I will now turn to the Court's authority to approve the
7 gatekeeper provision.

8 There are three alternative bases upon which the Court can
9 approve the gatekeeper provision. First, several provisions
10 of the Bankruptcy Code give broad authority to approve a
11 provision like the gatekeeper provision.

12 Second, the Court can analogize to the Barton Doctrine the
13 facts and circumstances in this case and authorize the Court
14 to act as a gatekeeper to prevent frivolous litigation from
15 being filed against court-appointed officers and directors and
16 those that will lead the post-confirmation monetization of the
17 estate's assets.

18 And third, Your Honor, the Court can find that Mr. Dondero
19 and his entities are vexatious litigants, and use the
20 gatekeeper provision as a sanction to prevent the filing of
21 baseless litigation designed merely to harass those in charge
22 of the estate post-confirmation.

23 So, Bankruptcy Court authority. Your Honor, there are
24 several provisions in the Bankruptcy Code which we rely on to
25 support the Court's authority. First, Section 1123(a)(5)

1 permits the plan to approve adequate means of implementation,
2 and contains a long, non-exclusive list. Mr. Seery's
3 testimony is uncontroverted that a gatekeeper provision is
4 necessary for the adequate implementation of the plan.

5 Second, Your Honor, 1123(b) (6) authorizes a plan to
6 include any appropriate provision in a plan not inconsistent
7 with any other provision in this Code. There are not any
8 provisions and none have been cited by the Objectors that
9 would prohibit a gatekeeper provision. Section 1141
10 effectively holds that the terms of a plan bind the debtor and
11 its creditors and vest property in a reorganized debtor, free
12 and clear of the interests of third parties.

13 If nothing else, Your Honor, the spirit of 1141 allows the
14 Court to prevent, in appropriate cases, vexatious litigation
15 by unhappy creditors and parties in interest from torpedoing
16 the plan.

17 1142(b), Your Honor, provides that the confirmation --
18 that, after confirmation, the Court may direct any parties to
19 perform any act necessary for the consummation of the plan,
20 and requiring the party to seek court-approval before filing
21 an action is certainly an act.

22 And lastly, Your Honor, Section 105 allows the Court to
23 enter orders necessary to order other things, enforce orders
24 of the Court like the confirmation order, and prevent an abuse
25 of process which would certainly occur if baseless litigation

1 were filed against the parties in charge of the Reorganized
2 Debtor and the trust vehicles entrusted with carrying out the
3 plan.

4 Your Honor, gatekeepers are not a novel concept and have
5 been approved by courts in appropriate circumstances. In the
6 *Madoff* cases, the Court has been the gatekeeper post-
7 confirmation to determine whether investor claims are
8 derivative or direct claims.

9 In *General Motors*, the Court has been the gatekeeper post-
10 confirmation to determine whether product liability claims are
11 proper claims against the reorganized debtor.

12 Closer to home, Judge Lynn, Mr. Dondero's counsel,
13 approved a gatekeeper provision, arguably even more far-
14 reaching than the provision here, in the *Pilgrim's Pride* case.
15 In that case, Judge Lynn held that *Pacific Lumber* prevented
16 him -- prevented the Court from approving the exculpation
17 provision in the plan. However, he did hold that it was
18 appropriate for the Court to ensure that debtor
19 representatives are not improperly pursued for their good-
20 faith actions by requiring that any actions against the debtor
21 or its representatives, and further, on the performance of
22 their obligations as debtor-in-possession, be heard
23 exclusively before the Bankruptcy Court.

24 And *Pilgrim's Pride* is not the only case in this district
25 to include a gatekeeper provision, as Judge Houser approved

1 one in the *CHC Group* in 2016, which is cited in our materials.

2 The theme in all these cases, Your Honor, is that there
3 are circumstances where it is necessary and appropriate for
4 the Bankruptcy Court to act as a gatekeeper as a means of
5 reducing litigation that could interfere with a confirmed plan
6 and that a Court has the authority to approve such provisions.

7 The Objectors argue that the Bankruptcy Court does not
8 have jurisdiction to approve that provision. The Debtor
9 understands the argument as it related to the prior provision,
10 which gave the Court exclusive jurisdiction over any claim it
11 found colorable, and we've amended the plan to address that
12 issue. The jurisdiction to deal with those claims could be
13 left to a later day.

14 But to the extent the Objectors still pursue the
15 jurisdiction argument in light of the current provision,
16 they're really conflating two very different things: the
17 ability to determine whether a claim is colorable and the
18 ability to adjudicate that claim if the Court determines it's
19 colorable.

20 None of the authorities cited by the Objectors hold that
21 the Court is without jurisdiction to approve a gatekeeper
22 provision like the one here. So, rather, what they do is they
23 try to -- they argue, based upon the *Craig's Stores* case,
24 which is narrower than other circuits of post-confirmation
25 jurisdiction in the Bankruptcy Court, and argue that the

1 gatekeeper provision doesn't fall within that. But that --
2 such reliance is misplaced, Your Honor.

3 *Craig* held that the Bankruptcy Court did not have
4 jurisdiction to adjudicate a post-confirmation dispute over a
5 private-label credit card agreement between the debtor and the
6 bank. In declining to find jurisdiction, the Fifth Circuit
7 remarked that there was no antagonism or claim pending between
8 the parties as of the reorganization and no facts or law
9 deriving from the reorganization or the plan was necessary to
10 the claim asserted by the debtor.

11 However, in so ruling, Your Honor, the Fifth Circuit did
12 reason that post-confirmation jurisdiction in the Bankruptcy
13 Court continues to exist for matters pertaining to
14 implementation and execution of the plan. Requiring parties
15 to seek Bankruptcy Court determination the claim is colorable
16 before embarking on litigation that will impact
17 indemnification rights and affect distributions to creditors
18 is not an expansion of jurisdiction and fits well within the
19 *Craig* reasoning.

20 Unlike the credit card agreement dispute in *Craig*, Mr.
21 Dondero and his entities have demonstrated tremendous
22 antagonism towards the Debtor. And while the Debtor's plan
23 may be confirmed, further litigation has been threatened by
24 Mr. Dondero. It's in the pleadings. That's one of the
25 reasons Mr. Dondero says his plan is better. It'll avoid

1 tremendous amount of litigation.

2 After *Craig*, the Fifth Circuit again examined the
3 bankruptcy court's post-confirmation jurisdiction in the
4 *Stoneridge* case in 2005. In that case, the Fifth Circuit
5 ruled that a bankruptcy court has post-confirmation
6 jurisdiction to resolve a dispute between two nondebtors that
7 could trigger indemnification claims against a liquidating
8 trust formed as a result of a confirmed plan.

9 And lastly, as I mentioned Your Honor's decision before,
10 the *TXMS Real Estate* case, I think just a couple of months
11 ago, it stands for the proposition that post-confirmation
12 jurisdiction exists for matters bearing on the implementation,
13 interpretation, and execution of a plan. In that case, Your
14 Honor ruled that Your Honor had jurisdiction to resolve a
15 post-confirmation dispute between a liquidating trust formed
16 under a plan and a landlord, the result of which could
17 significantly and adversely affect the value of the
18 liquidating trust and monies available for unsecured
19 creditors.

20 And you have heard Mr. Seery testify that litigation will
21 have an adverse effect on the ability to make distributions to
22 creditors.

23 So, Your Honor, under these authorities, the Court
24 undoubtedly would have jurisdiction to act as the gatekeeper
25 for the litigation.

1 There's also an independent basis for the gatekeeper
2 provision, Your Honor, the Barton Doctrine, which the Court is
3 very familiar from your opinion in the *In re Ondova* case in
4 2017 and which provides that before a suit may be brought
5 against a trustee, leave of Court is required. In *Ondova*, the
6 Court reviewed the history of the doctrine in connection with
7 litigation brought by a highly-litigious debtor against a
8 trustee and his professionals. This Court noted that there
9 are several important policies followed by the doctrine,
10 including a concern for the overall integrity of the
11 bankruptcy process and the threat of trustees being distracted
12 from or intimidated from doing their jobs. And Your Honor's
13 language still: For example, losers in the bankruptcy process
14 might turn to other courts to try to become winners there by
15 alleging the trustee did a negligent job.

16 Your Honor, this is precisely what the Debtor is trying to
17 prevent here, Mr. Dondero and his entities from putting the
18 bad experience before Your Honor in this case behind it and
19 going to try to find better luck in a more hospitable court.

20 Your Honor, the Barton Doctrine originally only applied to
21 receivers, and over the course of time has been extended to
22 apply to various court-appointed fiduciaries, as we have cited
23 in our materials: trustees, debtors-in-possession, officers
24 and directors, employees, and attorneys representing the
25 debtor.

1 And I expect the Objectors to argue that there is a
2 statutory exception to the Barton Doctrine under 28 U.S.C. 959
3 and it does not apply to acts or transactions in carrying out
4 business conducted with a property. The exception, Your
5 Honor, is very narrow and was meant to apply for things like
6 slip-and-fall cases. In fact, the Eleventh Circuit in the
7 *Carter v. Rodgers* case, 220 F.3d 1249 in 2000, held that
8 Section 11 -- 28 U.S.C. 959(a) does not apply to suits against
9 trustees for administering or liquidating the bankruptcy
10 estate.

11 The Objectors also argue that the gatekeeper provision
12 violates *Stern v. Marshal*. However, as the Court acknowledged
13 in *Ondova*, the Fifth Circuit in *Villegas v. Schmidt* has
14 recognized that the Barton Doctrine remains viable post-*Stern*
15 *v. Marshal*. The Fifth Circuit reasoned that while Barton
16 Doctrine is jurisdictional in that a court does not have
17 jurisdiction of an action if preapproval has not been
18 obtained, it does not implicate the extent of a bankruptcy
19 court's jurisdiction to adjudicate the underlying claim,
20 precisely the distinction we're making here. The bankruptcy
21 court would be the gatekeeper for deciding whether the claim
22 passes through the gate, and then after will decide if it has
23 jurisdiction to rule on the underlying claim.

24 And this is important especially in a case like this, Your
25 Honor, where Your Honor has had extensive experience with the

1 parties and is in the best position to determine whether the
2 claims are valid or attempted to be used as harassment.

3 The Objectors will complain about the open-ended nature of
4 the gatekeeper provision, whether it will or won't apply after
5 the case is closed or a final decree is issued, and the unfair
6 burden of their rights.

7 Your Honor has a previous reported opinion where basically
8 jurisdiction does extend after a case is closed or a final
9 decree is entered, so that issue is a red herring.

10 As Your Honor is well aware, it's a decade-long -- a
11 decade of litigation against the Dondero-controlled entities
12 that caused the Highland bankruptcy. And the Court is very
13 well aware of the litigation that occurred in *Acis*, very well
14 aware of the litigation that's occurred here that I mentioned
15 a few minutes ago. Your Honor, it is not over, you'll be
16 presiding over the contempt hearing.

17 And if the Court needs yet another ground to approve the
18 gatekeeper provision, the Debtor submits that the procedure is
19 an appropriate sanction for Dondero's vexatious litigation
20 activities. We cited the *In re Carroll* case in the Fifth
21 Circuit of 2017 that held that a bankruptcy court has the
22 authority to enjoin a litigant from filing any pleading in any
23 action without the prior authority from the bankruptcy court.

24 And in affirming the decision of the bankruptcy court, the
25 Fifth Circuit commented on the reasons the bankruptcy court

1 gave for its ruling. After recounting the bad faith of
2 appellants, the bankruptcy court determined that the Carrolls'
3 true motives were to harass the trustee and thereby delay the
4 proper administration of the estate, in the hope that they
5 would be able to retain their assets or make pursuit of the
6 assets so unappealing that the trustee would be compelled to
7 settle on terms favorable to appellants.

8 Sounds familiar, Your Honor. The same can certainly be
9 said about what Mr. Dondero is doing in this case.

10 And to make a showing that a party is vexatious litigant,
11 the Court must find that the party has a history of vexatious
12 and harassing litigation, whether the party has a good faith
13 -- the litigation or has filed it as a means to harass, the
14 burden to the Court and other parties, and the adequacy of
15 alternative sanctions.

16 And as Your Honor is well aware from all the litigation,
17 Your Honor is well, well able to make the finding required for
18 the vexatious litigation finding.

19 But here, we don't ask for the drastic sanction of
20 enjoining from any further filings. Rather, we just ask for a
21 less-severe sanction, requiring Mr. Dondero and his entities
22 to first make a showing that he has a colorable claim.

23 The Fifth Circuit in *Baum v. Blue Moon*, 2007, did exactly
24 that. In *Baum*, the district court barred a vexatious litigant
25 from initiating litigation without first obtaining the

1 approval of the district court. Ultimately, the matter
2 reached the Fifth Circuit after the district court had
3 modified the pre-filing injunction to limit it to a certain
4 case, and then broadened it again based upon continued bad
5 faith conduct.

6 On appeal, the Fifth Circuit, citing several prior cases,
7 noted that a district court has the authority to impose a pre-
8 filing injunction to defer vexatious, abusive, and harassing
9 litigation.

10 And for those reasons, Your Honor, the Debtor asks the
11 Court to overrule any objections to the gatekeeper provision.

12 Your Honor, I was just going to then go to the plan
13 modification provisions, but I wanted to stop and see if you
14 had any questions at this point.

15 THE COURT: I do not. Let's give him a time
16 estimate, Nate. About how --

17 THE CLERK: Twenty.

18 MR. POMERANTZ: I have another five or six minutes, I
19 think, based upon --

20 THE COURT: Okay.

21 MR. POMERANTZ: And then I'll be ready to turn it
22 over to --

23 THE COURT: Okay.

24 MR. POMERANTZ: -- to Mr. Kharasch.

25 THE COURT: All right. Yes. You've got -- you've

1 done an hour and 33 minutes. So you have about, I guess, 37
2 minutes left. Okay. Go ahead.

3 MR. POMERANTZ: Thank you, Your Honor.

4 I would like to address the modifications of the plan that
5 were contained in our January 22nd plan and the additional
6 changes filed on February 1, several of which I have referred.

7 As a preliminary matter, Your Honor, under 1127(b), the
8 Debtor can modify a plan at any time prior to confirmation if
9 -- and not require resolicitation if there's no adverse change
10 in the treatment of claim or interest of any equity holder.

11 With that background, I won't go through the changes we
12 made that I've already discussed, but I will point out a
13 couple, Your Honor, that I would like to point out now. We
14 have modified the plan with respect to conditions of the
15 effective date in Article 8. First, a condition to the
16 effective date will now be entry of a final order confirming a
17 plan, as opposed just to entry of order. And final order is
18 defined as the exhaustion of all appeals.

19 In addition, the ability to obtain directors and officers
20 insurance coverage on terms acceptable to the Debtor, the
21 Committee, the Claimant Trustee, the Claimant Trustee
22 Oversight Board, and the Litigation Trustee is now a condition
23 to the effective date.

24 The Court heard testimony today and has experienced
25 firsthand the litigiousness of Mr. Dondero and his related

1 entities. And the Court heard testimony from Mr. Tauber and
2 Aon that the D&O insurance will not be available post-
3 effective date without assurances that the gatekeeper
4 provision will be in effect for the duration of the policy and
5 any run-off period.

6 Mr. Tauber further testified that he expected the final
7 terms from the insurance carrier to provide that if the
8 confirmation order was reversed on appeal and the gatekeeper
9 was removed, it would void -- it would either void the
10 directors and officers coverage or it'd result in a Dondero
11 exclusion.

12 Mr. Dondero and his entities are no strangers to the
13 appellate process, as Your Honor knows. They appealed several
14 of your orders, and continue the tack in this case, having
15 appealed the Acis and the HarbourVest orders and the
16 preliminary injunction. It would not surprise the Debtor if
17 Mr. Dondero and his entities appealed your confirmation order,
18 if Your Honor decides to confirm the plan.

19 The Debtor is confident that it will prevail on any appeal
20 in the confirmation order, as we believe the Debtor has made a
21 compelling case for confirmation.

22 The Debtor also believes a compelling case exists that if
23 the plan went effective without a stay pending appeal, that
24 the appeal would be equitably moot, but we understand we are
25 facing headwinds from the courts, bankruptcy court have

1 addressed that issue before.

2 However, given the effect a reversal would have on the
3 availability of insurance coverage, the Claimant Trustee, the
4 Claimant Oversight Committee, and the Litigation Trustee are
5 just not willing to take that risk.

6 We are hopeful that Mr. Dondero and his entities will
7 recognize that any appeal is futile and step aside and let the
8 plan proceed and become effective.

9 If Mr. Dondero and his related entities do appeal the
10 confirmation order, preventing it from becoming final and
11 preventing the effective date from the occurring, the Debtor
12 intends to work closely with the Committee to ratchet down
13 costs substantially and proceed to operate and monetize assets
14 as appropriate until an order becomes final.

15 None of these modifications adversely affect the treatment
16 of claims or interests under the plan, Your Honor, and for
17 those reasons, Your Honor, we request that the Court approve
18 those modifications.

19 And with that, I would like to turn the podium over to Mr.
20 Kharasch to briefly address the remaining CLO objections.

21 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Kharasch?

22 CLOSING ARGUMENT ON BEHALF OF THE DEBTOR

23 MR. KHARASCH: Good afternoon, Your Honor. I'll be
24 as brief as possible. I know we're under a deadline.

25 As you've heard yesterday, you've heard before in other

1 proceedings, Your Honor, the CLO Objecting Parties, the so-
2 called investors, do have rights under the CLO management
3 agreements and indentures, including contractual rights to
4 terminate the management agreements under certain
5 circumstances.

6 What they complain about today, Your Honor, is that the
7 injunction language in the plan, including the language
8 preventing actions to interfere with the implementation and
9 consummation of the plan, is so broad and ambiguous that their
10 rights are or may be improperly impacted, especially any
11 rights to remove the manager for acts of malfeasance.

12 But the Debtor is primarily relying, Your Honor, not so
13 much on the plan injunctions but on the clear provisions of
14 the January 9 order, to which Mr. Dondero consented and which
15 provides that Mr. Dondero shall not cause any of his related
16 entities to terminate any agreements with the Debtor.

17 Yes, that is a broad provision, but it is very clear, and
18 it does not even allow the CLO Objecting Parties to come to
19 court under a gatekeeper-type provision. But that is what Mr.
20 Dondero consented to on behalf of himself and his related
21 entities.

22 Important to note, Your Honor, we are not here today to
23 litigate who is and who is not a related entity. That will be
24 left for another day. However, Your Honor, we have considered
25 these issues, including last night and this morning, and we

1 are going to propose -- well, we will modify our plan through
2 a provision in the confirmation order to provide the
3 following: Notwithstanding anything in the plan or the
4 January 9 order, the CLO Objecting Parties will not be
5 precluded from exercising their contractual or statutory
6 rights in the CLOs based on negligence, malfeasance, or any
7 wrongdoing, but before exercising such rights shall come to
8 this Court to determine whether those rights are colorable and
9 to also determine whether they are a related entity. If the
10 Court has jurisdiction, the Court can determine the underlying
11 colorable rights or claims.

12 This does not impact the separate settlement we have with
13 CLO Holdco, Your Honor.

14 We think that such modification addresses some of the
15 concerns raised yesterday by the objecting parties by
16 providing more clarity as to what the plan is doing and not
17 doing with respect to the plan and the January 9 order, and we
18 think it is also a fair resolution of some legitimate
19 concerns.

20 So, with that, Your Honor, we think that, with that
21 clarification that we did not have to make but are willing to
22 make, that this should fully satisfy the CLO Objecting Parties
23 with regard to their objections to the injunction and the
24 gatekeeper.

25 Thank you, Your Honor.

1 THE COURT: All right. Mr. Clemente?

2 CLOSING ARGUMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CREDITORS' COMMITTEE

3 MR. CLEMENTE: Yes, Your Honor. And I actually am
4 going to be brief. Mr. Pomerantz's discussion, obviously, was
5 very, very thorough, so I'm able to cut out a lot of stuff.

6 Thank you, Your Honor. Matt Clemente, Sidley Austin, on
7 behalf of the Committee.

8 The plan, Your Honor, meets the confirmation standards and
9 should be confirmed. Mr. Pomerantz covered a lot of ground,
10 and I will endeavor not to repeat that, but there are a few
11 points that I think the Committee wishes to emphasize.

12 Your Honor, since I first appeared in front of you, I have
13 maintained consistently that no plan can or should be
14 confirmed without the consent of the Committee. Your Honor,
15 in her wisdom, understood this immediately, as it was obvious
16 -- it was the obvious conclusion, given the makeup of the
17 creditor body, the asset pool, and the impetus for the filing
18 of the case.

19 Unfortunately, not everyone came to this conclusion so
20 easily, and it took much hard-fought negotiations as well as a
21 defeated disclosure statement, among other things, and
22 tireless dedication and commitment by each individual
23 Committee member to drive for a value-maximizing plan that is
24 in the best interests of its constituencies and for us to get
25 to where we are today.

1 And where we are today, Your Honor, is at confirmation for
2 a plan that the Committee unanimously supports, which was the
3 inevitable outcome for this case from the very beginning.

4 I've also said, Your Honor, that context is critical in
5 this case. It has been from the beginning, and it remains so
6 now. Mr. Draper, interestingly, began his comments yesterday
7 by saying that even a serial killer is entitled to *Miranda*
8 rights. While I will admit that at times the rhetoric in this
9 case has been heated, I have never certainly likened Mr.
10 Dondero to a serial killer. But the record shows, and Mr.
11 Dondero's own words and actions show, that he is, in fact, a
12 serial litigator who has no hesitation at all to take any
13 position in an attempt to leverage an outcome that suits his
14 self-interest. And he has no hesitation at all to use his
15 many tentacles in a similar fashion.

16 That is a very important context in which the Court should
17 view the remaining objections of the Dondero tentacles and
18 weigh confirmation of the Debtor's plan.

19 Against this context of a serial litigator, Your Honor, we
20 have a plan supported by each member of the Official Committee
21 of Unsecured Creditors, accepted by two classes of claims,
22 Class 2 and Class 7, and holders of almost one hundred percent
23 in amount of non-insider claims in Class 8.

24 The parties that have voted against the plan are either
25 employees who are not receiving distributions under the plan

1 or are insiders or parties related to Mr. Dondero.

2 The overwhelming number and amount of creditors who are
3 receiving distributions under this plan, therefore, have
4 accepted the plan. The true creditors and economic parties in
5 interest have spoken, they have spoken loudly, and they have
6 spoken in favor of confirming the plan.

7 Your Honor, I'm not going to address the technical
8 requirements, as Mr. Pomerantz did that. So I'm going to skip
9 over my remarks in that regard, except I do want to emphasize
10 the remarks regarding the gatekeeper, exculpation, and
11 injunction provisions as they're of critical importance to the
12 plan.

13 The testimony has shown and the proceedings of this case
14 has shown, again, Mr. Dondero is a serial litigator with a
15 stated goal of causing destruction and delay through
16 litigation.

17 The testimony has further shown that none of the
18 independent board members would have signed onto the role
19 without the gatekeeper and injunction provisions and the
20 indemnity from the Debtor.

21 Therefore, it follows that such provisions are necessary
22 to entice parties to serve in the Claimant Trustee and other
23 roles under the plan, which, as I remarked in my opening
24 comments, are integral to providing the structure that the
25 creditors believe is necessary to unlocking the value and

1 unlocking themselves from the Dondero web.

2 Regarding the exculpation and injunction provisions
3 specifically, Your Honor, the Court will recall that the
4 Committee raised objections to them in connection with the
5 first disclosure statement hearing. In response, the Debtor
6 narrowed the provisions, and the Committee believes they
7 comply with the Fifth Circuit precedent, as Mr. Pomerantz ably
8 walked Your Honor through.

9 And to be clear, Your Honor, not only does the Committee
10 believe the exculpation and injunction provisions comply with
11 Fifth Circuit law, the Committee does not believe the estate
12 is harmed by such provisions, as the Committee does not
13 believe there are any cognizable claims that could or should
14 be raised that would otherwise be affected by the exculpation
15 or injunction, and, frankly, with respect to the release that
16 Mr. Pomerantz walked Your Honor through with respect to the
17 directors and the officers.

18 Regarding the gatekeeper, Your Honor, Your Honor
19 presciently approved it in her January 9th order, and the
20 developments since then only serve as further justification
21 for including it in the plan and confirmation order. Mr.
22 Dondero is a serial and vexatious litigator, and the
23 instruments put in place under the plan to maximize value for
24 the creditors and to oversee that value-maximizing process
25 must be protected, and the gatekeeper function serves that

1 protection while also, importantly, as Mr. Pomerantz pointed
2 out, providing Mr. Dondero with a forum to advance any
3 legitimate claims he and his tentacles may have.

4 In short, Your Honor, the gatekeeper provision is
5 necessary to the implementation to the plan, is fair under the
6 circumstances of the case, and is therefore within this
7 Court's authority, and it is appropriate to approve.

8 Your Honor, in sum, it has been a long road to get here
9 today, but we are finally here. And we are here, Your Honor,
10 I believe in large part as a result of the tireless efforts of
11 the individual members of my Committee, and for that I thank
12 them.

13 The Committee fully supports and unanimously supports
14 confirmation of the plan. As demonstrated by the evidence,
15 the plan meets all the requirements of the Bankruptcy Code.
16 The Committee believes the plan is in the best interests of
17 its constituencies. And therefore the Committee, along with
18 two classes of creditors and the overwhelming amount of
19 creditors in terms of dollars, urge you to confirm the plan.

20 That's all I have, Your Honor, but I'm happy to answer any
21 questions you may have for me.

22 THE COURT: Okay. Not at this time.

23 Nate, how much time --

24 (Clerk advises.)

25 THE COURT: Twenty-five minutes remaining? All

1 right. Just so you know, you've got a collective Debtor's
2 counsel/Committee's counsel 25 minutes remaining for any
3 rebuttal, if you choose to make it.

4 Let's take a five-minute break, and then we'll hear the
5 Objectors' closing arguments. Okay.

6 THE CLERK: All rise.

7 (A recess ensued from 2:00 p.m. until 2:06 p.m.)

8 THE COURT: All right. Please be seated. We're
9 going back on the record in Highland. We're ready to hear the
10 Objectors' closing arguments. Who wants to go first?

11 MR. DRAPER: Your Honor, this -- this is Douglas
12 Draper. I get the joy of going first.

13 THE COURT: Okay.

14 CLOSING ARGUMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GET GOOD AND DUGABOY TRUSTS

15 MR. DRAPER: We've heard a great deal of testimony
16 about the Debtor's belief that the circumstances in this case
17 warrant an exception to existing Fifth Circuit case law, the
18 Bankruptcy Code, and Court's post-confirmation jurisdiction.

19 I would not be standing here today objecting to the plan
20 if the Debtor didn't attempt to extend, move past and beyond
21 the Barton Doctrine, move beyond 1141, move beyond *Pacific*
22 *Lumber*. In fact, I think I heard an argument that *Pacific*
23 *Lumber* is not applicable and this Court should disregard Fifth
24 Circuit case law.

25 Let's start with the exculpation provision. And the focus

1 of this case has been, and what we've heard over the last few
2 days, is about the independent directors. I understand there
3 was an order entered earlier, the order stands, and the order
4 is applicable in this case. It cuts off, however, when we
5 have a Reorganized Debtor, because these independent directors
6 are no longer independent directors. It cuts off when we have
7 a new general partner.

8 And so the protections that were afforded by that order do
9 not need to be afforded to the new officers and new directors
10 of the new general partner. And in fact, the protections that
11 they're entitled to are completely different than the
12 protections that were entitled -- that are covered by the
13 order that the Court has looked at.

14 Let's first focus on, however, the exculpation provision.
15 And I wanted to ask the Court to look at the exculpated
16 parties. Have to be very careful and very interest -- and
17 focus solely on the independent directors. But if you look at
18 the parties covered by exculpation provision, it includes the
19 professionals retained by the Debtor. My reading of *Pacific*
20 *Lumber* is that neither the Creditors' Committee counsel nor
21 the Debtor can be covered by an exculpation provision. This
22 in and of itself makes the plan non-confirmable. This
23 exculpation provision is unwarranted and unnecessary.

24 Two, --

25 THE COURT: Well, let's drill down on that.

1 MR. DRAPER: -- we have --

2 THE COURT: Let's drill down on that. Mr. Pomerantz
3 says that this wasn't what they considered one way or another
4 by *Pacific Lumber*. Debtor, debtor professionals. Okay? Do
5 you disagree with that?

6 MR. DRAPER: I disagree with that. *Pacific Lumber*
7 said you could only have releases and exculpations for the
8 Creditors' Committee members. And the rationale behind that
9 was that those people volunteered to be part and parcel of the
10 bankruptcy process, that those parties did not get paid.
11 Here, we have two professionals who both volunteered and are
12 being paid, and are not entitled to an exculpation under
13 *Pacific Lumber*. They're not entitled to a --

14 THE COURT: Okay. So you say *Pacific* --

15 MR. DRAPER: -- release. Now, ultimately, they --

16 THE COURT: -- *Pacific Lumber* categorically rejected
17 all exculpations except to Creditors' Committee and its
18 members. That's your --

19 MR. DRAPER: I agree. That's --

20 THE COURT: -- interpretation of *Pacific Lumber*?

21 MR. DRAPER: Yes.

22 THE COURT: Okay. All right. So you just absolutely
23 disagree, one by one, with every one of the arguments, that it
24 was really -- the only thing before the Fifth Circuit was plan
25 sponsors, okay? A plan proponent that I think was like a

1 competitor previously of the debtor, and I think a large
2 creditor or secured creditor. I think those were the two plan
3 proponents.

4 So you disagree -- I'm going to, obviously, go back and
5 line-by-line pour through *Pacific Lumber*, but you disagree
6 with Mr. Pomerantz's notion that, look, it was really a page
7 and a half or two of a multipage opinion where the Fifth
8 Circuit said, no, I don't think 524(e) is authority to give
9 exculpation from postpetition liability for negligence as to
10 these two plan sponsors. And I guess it was also -- I don't
11 know. They say, Pachulski's briefing says it was really only
12 looking at these two plan sponsors and the Committee and its
13 members on appeal, you know, going through the briefing, and
14 in such, you can see that these were all that was presented
15 and addressed by the Fifth Circuit. You disagree with that?

16 MR. DRAPER: Look, I know the facts of *Pacific Lumber*
17 and they -- I know what the posture of the case was. However,
18 the literal language by the opinion in it, it transcends just
19 a dispute in the case. And I think the U.S. Trustee's
20 position that this exculpation provision is correct as a
21 matter of law support -- is further evidence of the fact that
22 the U.S. Trustee, as watchdog of this process, and *Pacific*
23 *Lumber* say this cannot be done, period, end of story.

24 THE COURT: Okay. So you, at bottom, just totally
25 disagree with Mr. Pomerantz? You say *Pacific Lumber* is

1 actually a very broad holding, and I guess, if such, there's a
2 conflict among the Circuits, right?

3 MR. DRAPER: Well, that's okay.

4 THE COURT: So, --

5 MR. DRAPER: I mean, quite frankly, *Pacific Lumber* is
6 binding on you.

7 THE COURT: Understood.

8 MR. DRAPER: There may be a conflict in the Circuits,
9 and ultimately the Supreme Court may make a decision and
10 decide who's right and who's wrong.

11 But for purposes of today and for purposes of this
12 exculpation provision and for purposes of this confirmation,
13 *Pacific Lumber* is the applicable law.

14 THE COURT: Okay. Well, again, this is a hugely
15 important issue, although in many ways I don't understand why
16 it is, because we're just talking about postpetition acts and
17 negligence, okay? You know, many might say it's much ado
18 about nothing, but it's front and center of your objection.
19 So I guess I'm just thinking through, if the Fifth Circuit was
20 presented these exact facts and was presented with the
21 argument, you know, the *Blixseth* case says 524(e) has nothing
22 to do with exculpation because exculpation is a postpetition
23 concept, and it's just talking about standard liability --
24 these people aren't going to be liable for negligence; they
25 can be liable for anything and everything else -- if presented

1 with that *Blixseth* case, you know, there are several arguments
2 that Mr. Pomerantz has made why, if you accept that 524(e)
3 might not apply here, let's look at the reasoning, the little
4 bit of reasoning we had of *Pacific Lumber*, that it was really
5 a policy rationale, right? These independent fiduciaries,
6 strangers to the company and case, they'd never want to do
7 this if they knew they were vulnerable for getting sued for
8 negligence. Mr. Pomerantz's argument is that these
9 independent board members are exactly analogous to a
10 Committee, more than prepetition officers and directors. What
11 do you have to say about that policy argument?

12 MR. DRAPER: Well, I think there's a huge distinction
13 between the members of a Creditors' Committee who are
14 volunteers and are not paid versus a paid independent
15 director. And more importantly, I think there's a huge
16 difference between a member of a Creditors' Committee who's
17 not paid and counsel for a Debtor and counsel for a Creditors'
18 Committee.

19 THE COURT: Okay.

20 MR. DRAPER: Look, you have -- you've --

21 THE COURT: So, at bottom, it was all about
22 compensation to the Fifth Circuit?

23 MR. DRAPER: Well, no. The Fifth Circuit policy
24 decision was we want to protect a party who wants to serve and
25 do their civic duty to serve on a Creditors' Committee for no

1 compensation. I agree with that. I think it's a laudable
2 policy decision. I think it makes sense.

3 However, the Fifth Circuit in its language basically said,
4 nobody else gets it. It didn't say, look, you know, if there
5 are circumstances that are different, we may look at it
6 differently. The language is absolute in the opinion. And
7 that's what I think is binding and I think that's what the
8 case stands for.

9 And look, just so the Court is very clear, when Pachulski
10 files its fee application and the Court grants the fee
11 application, any claim against them is res judicata. So, in
12 fact, they do have -- they do have protection. They do have
13 the ability to get out from under. The Court -- they're just
14 not -- they just can't get out from under through an
15 exculpation provision. And the same goes for Mr. Clemente and
16 his firm.

17 THE COURT: Which, --

18 MR. DRAPER: And the same goes for DSI.

19 THE COURT: Which, by the way, that's one reason I
20 think sometimes this is much ado about nothing. It goes both
21 ways. The Debtor professionals, the Committee professionals,
22 estate professionals, they're going to get cleared on the day
23 any fee app is approved, right? I mean, there's Fifth Circuit
24 law that says --

25 MR. DRAPER: I -- I --

1 THE COURT: -- says that's res judicata as to any
2 future claims.

3 But I guess I'm really trying to understand, you know, at
4 bottom, I feel like the Fifth Circuit was making a holding
5 based on policy more than any directly applicable Code
6 provision.

7 I mean, it's been said, for example, that Committee
8 members, they're entitled to exculpation because of, what,
9 1103, some people argue, 1103, which subsection, (c)? That's
10 been quoted as giving, quote, qualified immunity to
11 Committees. But it doesn't really say that, right? It's just
12 something you infer.

13 MR. DRAPER: No. Look, what I think, if you really
14 want to put the two concepts together, I think what the Fifth
15 Circuit, when they told lawyers and professionals that you
16 can't get an exculpation, was very mindful of the fact that
17 you can get released once your fee app is approved. So, as a
18 policy, they didn't need to do it in a exculpation provision.
19 There was another methodology in which it could be done.

20 THE COURT: Uh-huh.

21 MR. DRAPER: And so that's -- you have to look at it
22 as holistic and not just focus on the exculpation provision.
23 Because, in fact, they recognize and they -- I'm sure they
24 knew their existing case law on res judicata, and that's why
25 they read it out.

1 So, honestly, there's no reason for Pachulski to be in
2 here. There's no reason for Mr. Clemente to be in here.
3 There's no reason for the professionals employed by the Debtor
4 to be in here. They have an exit not by virtue of the plan.

5 THE COURT: But so then it boils down to the
6 independent directors and Strand post January 9th?

7 MR. DRAPER: It boils down somewhat to them, but
8 quite frankly, there are two parts to this. One is you have
9 an order that's in place. I am not asking the Court to
10 overturn the order. And quite frankly, this provision could
11 have been written to the effect that the order that was in
12 place on -- that's been presented to the Court is applicable
13 and applied.

14 However, let's parse that down. Let's look at Mr. Seery.
15 The order that's in place solely protects the independent
16 directors acting in their capacities as independent directors.
17 If somebody's acting as -- and if you want to liken it to a
18 trustee, their protection is afforded by the Barton Doctrine,
19 and that's how the protection arises.

20 What's going on here is they're extending the provisions,
21 first of all, of the Court's order, and number two, of the
22 Barton Doctrine, which are -- which cannot be -- which should
23 not be extended. The law limits what protections you have and
24 what protections you don't have. And we, as lawyers -- look,
25 I'll give you the best example. Think of all the times you

1 had somebody write in the concept of superpriority in a cash
2 collateral order. And how many times have you had a lawyer
3 rewrite the concept of the issue as to diminution in value?
4 The Code says diminution in value, and quite frankly, a cash
5 collateral order should just say if, to the extent there's
6 diminution in value, just apply the Code section. It's
7 written there. Smart people put it in, and Congress approved
8 it. And once you start getting beyond that, those things
9 should be limited.

10 And what we have are lawyers trying to extend out by
11 definitions things that the Code limits by its reach. That
12 goes for post-confirmation jurisdiction. That goes for the
13 injunction. That goes for the so-called gatekeeper provision.

14 And so, again, I would not be here if, in fact, they had
15 said, we have an injunction to the full extent allowed by the
16 Bankruptcy Code and *Pacific Lumber*. We have an exculpation
17 provision that's allowed by virtue of the Court's order. We
18 have the full extent and full reach of the Barton Doctrine.
19 Those are legitimate. Once you start expanding upon that,
20 you're reaching into matters that are not authorized and not
21 allowed.

22 And then you get into 105 territory, which is always very
23 dangerous. And that's really what's going on here. And
24 that's the tenor of my argument and what I'm trying to say.
25 The Code gives protections. It is not for us to extend the

1 protections. It's not for us to enlarge them, even under a,
2 gee, the other party's litigious.

3 And so that's -- let's take *Craig's Store*. Attempted to
4 limit its reach. *Craig's Store* says once you have a confirmed
5 plan, any dispute between the parties, for -- let's take an
6 executory contract. If there's a breach of the executory
7 contract, that's a matter to be handled aft... by another
8 court. It's not a matter to be handled by this Court. This
9 Court lets the parties out.

10 And in this case, it's even worse, because you basically
11 have a new general partner coming in, you have an assumption
12 of various executory contracts, and you have a -- Strand is no
13 longer present.

14 If you adopted Mr. Seery's argument, anybody who appeals a
15 decision, questions what he does or how he does it, is a
16 vexatious litigator. That's not the case. And the fact that
17 we are appealing a decision is a right that we have. It
18 shouldn't be limited, and it shouldn't be held against us.
19 Courts can rule against us. That's fine.

20 And so that's really what the focus is here and that's why
21 I gave the opening that I had. We are willing to be bound by
22 applicable law. And quite frankly, the concept that the
23 exigencies of a case allow a court to change what applicable
24 law is is problematic. I gave the criminal example as a
25 reason. And the reason was that, in certain instances, the

1 application of law may allow a criminal to go free. It's a
2 problem with our system and how we work, but that's what the
3 law does, and it is absolute in its application.

4 Let me address the so-called gatekeeper provision. The
5 gatekeeper provision, in a certain sense, is recognized in the
6 Barton Doctrine. It's jurisdictional, and it says, to the
7 extent you're going to litigate with somebody who served
8 during the bankruptcy, who was a trustee, then you have to
9 come to the bankruptcy court and pass through a gate. It
10 doesn't say you have to pass through a gate for a reorganized
11 debtor who does something after a plan is confirmed and going
12 forward. And so that's -- there's a distinction.

13 And if you look at Judge Summerhays' decision, which I
14 will be happy to send to the Court, in *WRT* involving -- it's
15 kind of (indecipherable) and Mr. Pauker, where, in that case,
16 the trustee, the litigation trustee, spent more litigating
17 than it had in recoveries, and Baker Hughes filed suit. Judge
18 Summerhays said, look, the Barton Doctrine only applies to a
19 certain extent. It is limited once you get into post-
20 confirmation matters and related-to jurisdiction.

21 And so, again, the Barton Doctrine is what it stands for.
22 We agree with it, we recognize it, and it should be applied.
23 The Barton Doctrine, however, should not be extended, should
24 not go past its reach, and should not go past the grant of
25 jurisdiction for this Court.

1 And so you have in here, though they have -- they have
2 tried to hide it in a limited fashion, this gatekeeper
3 provision. The gatekeeper provision, as currently written,
4 covers post-confirmation claims that somebody has to come
5 before this Court to the extent there's a breach of a
6 contract. That's not proper, and it's not covered by your
7 post-confirmation jurisdiction. To the extent there's an
8 interpretation of an existing contract and an interpretation
9 of the order, you do have authority, and I don't question
10 that.

11 THE COURT: But address Mr. Pomerantz's statement
12 that there's a difference between saying you have to go to the
13 bankruptcy court and make an argument, we have a colorable
14 claim that we would like to pursue, and having that
15 jurisdictional step required. There's a difference between
16 that and the bankruptcy court adjudicating the claim.

17 MR. DRAPER: Well, there are two parts to that.
18 Number one is there's an injunction in place from an action
19 taken post-confirmation against property of the estate. We
20 all agree at that, correct? And we believe that the
21 injunction applies to post-confirmation action against
22 property of the pre-confirmation estate. We all agree to
23 that.

24 However, if in fact there's a breach of a contract
25 postpetition that the parties have a dispute about, that